

# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

## Monterey, California



## THESIS

**FRANCE, GERMANY, AND THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF A EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENSE IDENTITY**

by

Timothy D. Showers

June 2000

Thesis Advisor:  
Co-Advisor:

David S. Yost  
Donald Abenheim

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OF A EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENSE IDENTITY**

Timothy D. Showers  
Major, United States Army  
B.A., Boise State University, 1987

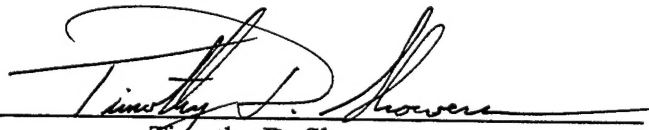
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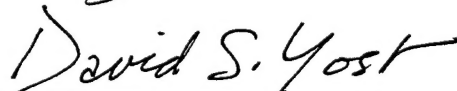
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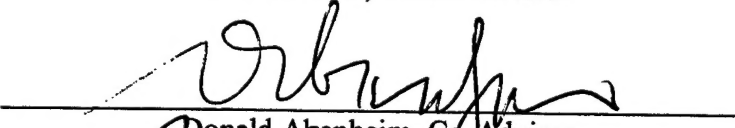
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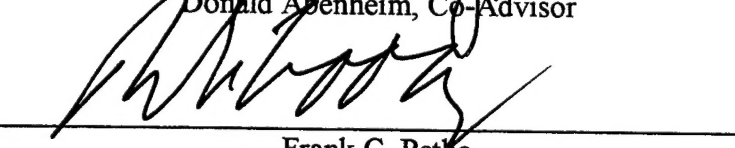
Author:

  
Timothy D. Showers

Approved by:

  
David S. Yost, Thesis Advisor

  
Donald Abenheim, Co-Advisor

  
Frank C. Petto  
Chairman, Department of National Security Affairs



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## **ABSTRACT**

The concept of a European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) within NATO is as old as the proposal made in 1950 by French Prime Minister René Pleven to form a European Defense Community (EDC) that would integrate French and German military forces into a common European army. However, the differences between French and German strategic culture have hampered efforts to establish an ESDI. One of the most critical dilemmas stems from the clash between (a) the German belief that United States engagement is essential to European stability and should not be undermined and (b) the long-standing goal of French leaders to develop a Europe that is more independent of American influence. Another key dilemma has involved French efforts to reconcile the Gaullist legacy of preserving national autonomy with an ever-increasing commitment to European integration and France's growing role in the integrated defense and security architecture of Europe. As long as French leaders continue to be influenced by de Gaulle's approach to foreign and national security policy, many obstacles to furthering the development and strengthening the capabilities of an ESDI will persist.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARRC	Allied Command Europe (ACE) Rapid Reaction Corps
AFSOUTH	Allied Forces Southern Europe
CDU	Christian Democratic Union, Germany
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CJTF	Combined Joint Task Force
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
CSU	Christian Social Union, Bavaria
DPC	Defense Planning Committee
EC	European Community
EDC	European Defense Community
EEC	European Economic Community
ESDI	European Security and Defense Identity
EU	European Union
FAR	<i>Force d'Action Rapide</i> (Rapid Deployment Force)
FDP	Free Democratic Party, Germany
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
INF	Intermediate Nuclear Forces
IRBM	Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile
KFOR	Kosovo Force
MLF	Multilateral Force
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NACC	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPG	Nuclear Planning Group
OCSE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PS	Socialist Party, France
RPR	Rally for the Republic, France
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative
SFOR	Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
SPD	Social Democratic Party of Germany
TEU	Treaty on European Union
UDF	Union for Democracy, France
UN	United Nations
WEU	Western European Union

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Together, France and Germany are among the leading powers in developing common policies for the European Union (EU), including efforts to provide for the establishment of a viable European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI). Nevertheless, the differences between French and German strategic culture have hindered the progress toward this aim. One of the most important dilemmas caused by these nations distinctive strategic cultures is the clash between (a) the German belief that the engagement and leadership role of the United States is essential to maintaining a stable and secure Europe, which should not be undermined by developing institutions that might threaten the American commitment to the region, and (b) the long-standing goal of French leaders to develop a more independent Europe in which France would have a prominent leadership role and in which U.S. influence would be greatly diminished.

German rejection of unilateralism for a strong embrace of multilateralism as the only appropriate way of conducting security affairs is the prominent feature of German strategic culture that developed in the post-World War II/Cold War years. During this same period, the belief in the importance of America's engagement in Europe matured from a view held by many Germans as far back as during the early 1920s. Consequently, the overriding German commitment to the United States and NATO always limited Franco-German defense integration and prevented the establishment of a separate European defense and security identity. Today, at the start of a new century that appears less threatening to the Germans, they still believe that the Atlantic Alliance should remain Europe's primary defense and security organization with an ESDI serving as the main European contribution to NATO.



Another significant dilemma stems from the 1960s, when de Gaulle started France on a separate course outside the integrated command structure of the Atlantic Alliance and established a pattern of defending and pursuing national interests. Since this time, and especially after the abrupt end to the bipolar Cold War conflict, French leaders have had to struggle with the Gaullist tenets that France must preserve its freedom of action and avoid integrated military structures, while at the same time advancing European integration and policies toward an ESDI. At the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the twenty-first century, it appears that French leaders are successfully adapting their nations strategic culture in order to participate more in the integrated defense and security structure of Europe. On the other hand, the desires of the French to promote their national interests by maximizing their influence over Europe through greater involvement in NATO and by developing the EU and ESDI can be interpreted as Gaullist aspirations. Furthermore, France's realist concerns about Germany dominating Europe, which is based on a historical mistrust of German power, is another key motive for French participation in supporting the FRG's full integration in Europe's multilateral institutions.

While it is possible to say with some confidence that the Germans will continue on a resolute path toward advancing European integration and the development of an ESDI, it is not so clear that France will remain dedicated to each of these goals. As long as French leaders continue to be influenced by the distinctive approach to foreign and national security policy established by Charles de Gaulle, many obstacles to Franco-German cooperation in furthering the development and strengthening the capabilities of a European Security and Defense Identity will persist in making this a slow process.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The purpose of this thesis is to assess the past and present efforts by the Franco-German partnership to build a viable European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI). Despite the achievements of France and the Federal Republic of Germany in pursuing a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and joint weapons programs, establishing new military institutions such as the Eurocorps, and conducting other security-related activities, persistent obstacles to more comprehensive Franco-German success in developing ESDI are rooted in their differing strategic cultures.

The Cold War caused the French and the West Germans to overlook many old animosities for reasons of collective defense. Since Germany's reunification in 1990, Franco-German cooperation has steadily increased to meet the challenges associated with European unification. Together, France and Germany are among the leading powers in developing common policies for the European Union, including efforts to provide for a security and defense identity. However, most of the European states continue to value their sovereignty, and wish to pursue their own national interests. France and Germany are not exceptions to this principle. Therefore, comments about national interests are included in this thesis in order to demonstrate how the differing strategic cultures of France and Germany have effected their leader's perceptions of their country's interests and, more importantly, how they should pursue these interests.

## B. METHODOLOGY

This thesis will compare and contrast the strategic cultures of Germany and France using the historical evaluative method. Such an approach looks below the system and state levels of analysis of international relations theory to evaluate the beliefs that guide policy makers and the consequences of the policies they pursue.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, because the changing international environment and the dynamics of domestic decision-making are of crucial importance to understanding the conditions for which defense and security policies are developed, both international and domestic factors play a key role in the analytical framework of this thesis. The objective is to achieve a deeper understanding of the difficulties that the Germans and the French face in developing a European Security and Defense Identity.

The periods examined in this thesis are the interwar years (1918-1939), the post-World War II/Cold War years (1946-1989), and the years from the end of the Cold War to the present.

The interwar years are important for a number of reasons, but most of all for establishing an understanding of the mistrust that still affects Franco-German cooperation today. This was the period in which French and German animosities reached a culminating point following a long history of antagonism and war. French efforts to limit German power through the Treaty of Versailles, which the United States and eventually Great Britain failed to support, caused some French leaders to change their

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<sup>1</sup> Margaret Levi, "A Model, a Method, and a Map: Rational Choice in Comparative and Historical Analysis," in Mark Irving Lichbach and Alan S. Zucherman, eds., *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 20.

confrontational strategy against Germany to a more defensive one.<sup>2</sup> However, French leaders did not deviate from their nation's strategic culture or abandon the tenacious pursuit of national interests, as they perceived them in the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>3</sup> During this era, the first democratic government of Germany was ultimately unsuccessful, not just because of outside pressures and its failed legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens, but also because many of the decision-makers of the Weimar Republic still accepted certain nationalistic and *Realpolitik* norms of German strategic culture, which they eventually chose to pursue behind a veil of cooperation.<sup>4</sup> Adolf Hitler would in turn take the most destructive aspects of Germany's strategic culture and pursue national interests to the extremes that had such devastating consequences for all of Europe.

The period after the Second World War and the decades of the Cold War offer many examples of genuine efforts by France and the Federal Republic of Germany to cooperate on matters of collective defense. This cooperation began with the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949-1950, and a very reserved French acceptance in 1954 of the need for the Federal Republic of Germany to establish armed forces and become a member of NATO in 1955.

General de Gaulle ushered in a remarkable new era in 1958 that would lead to some Franco-German bilateral agreements and joint military exercises outside the

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<sup>2</sup> Michael Howard, *War and the Liberal Conscience*, 3rd ed. (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1994), 85.

<sup>3</sup> Gordon A. Craig and Alexander L. George, *Force and Statecraft: Diplomatic Problems of Our Times*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 48-50.

<sup>4</sup> William R. Keylor, *The Twentieth-Century World: An International History*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 116-119.

integrated framework of NATO. However, de Gaulle also established a pattern of defending and pursuing national interests. These Gaullist principles would in turn have far-reaching negative and positive consequences for Franco-German defense cooperation from the 1960s on.<sup>5</sup>

Throughout the Cold War years, many West German Chancellors also sought closer defense ties with France. However, the leaders of the Federal Republic of Germany sometimes aggravated the French by not entering into any agreements that could upset their country's strong transatlantic relationship with the United States. The West Germans also pursued their own national interests during this period in ways that were not always fully compatible with the views of their NATO allies, but which never strayed too far from the constraints placed on them by the imperatives of alliance cohesion.<sup>6</sup>

In 1990, as the world emerged from the Cold War, the leaders of France and Germany made a new commitment to an old idea of European unification. They also determined that a European Security and Defense Identity, "separable but not separate" from NATO, is of crucial importance. The main point of convergence between French and German motives for unification is European stability, which serves both these continental powers' interests much better than a return to the days of unadulterated self-determination.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, it appears that French leaders are still struggling with the

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<sup>5</sup> Luigi Barzini, *The Europeans* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 149-150.

<sup>6</sup> Stephen A. Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe's Strategic Choices, 1955-1995* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 1995), 102.

<sup>7</sup> Jolyon Howorth, "France," in Jolyon Howorth and Anand Menon, eds., *The European Union and National Defense Policy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 34.

Gaullist tenets that France must preserve its sovereign freedom of action and avoid integrated military structures, while at the same time advancing European integration and policies toward ESDI.<sup>8</sup> In Germany, decision-makers are also grappling with the complexities of pursuing their country's national interests, while at the same time remaining committed to furthering European integration and security institutions in ways that limit the power of the German state, and thereby allay fears that they are seeking to establish German hegemony in Europe.<sup>9</sup>

To understand the reasoning behind the analysis in this thesis an explanation of what "strategic culture" means is imperative. First, it is important to note that a nation's strategic culture is part of its larger "political culture," which serves to guide and inform the behavior of a particular society or social unit, distinct from other societies.<sup>10</sup> The term "strategic culture" fulfills the role of explaining a political culture's foreign and national security policies. Second, political cultures tend to be highly stable over long periods of time, regardless of changing external and internal conditions. Thus, once a distinctive approach to foreign and national security policy has taken hold in a society through the processes of socialization and institutionalization, it tends "to continue despite changes in the circumstances that gave rise to it."<sup>11</sup> Third, when a political and strategic culture does

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<sup>8</sup> Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe's Strategic Choices, 1955-1995*, 238.

<sup>9</sup> Paul W. Schroeder, "Does the History of International Politics Go Anywhere?" in David Wetzel and Theodore S. Hamerow, eds., *International Politics and German History: The Past Informs the Present* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 1997), 15-36.

<sup>10</sup> Alastair Iain Johnston, "Thinking about Strategic Culture," *International Security*, vol. 19, no. 4 (Spring 1995): 45.

<sup>11</sup> Ken Booth, "The Concept of Strategic Culture Affirmed," in Carl G. Jacobsen, ed., *Strategic Power: USA/USSR* (London: Macmillan, 1990), 121-122.

change, it is usually the result of dramatic events that thoroughly discredit the core beliefs and values of the affected society.<sup>12</sup> To understand the differences in the strategic cultures of France and Germany today requires an examination of European history from 1918 to the end of the twentieth century, including the dramatic effect that the Second World War had in changing the core beliefs and values of the German people and their leaders.

Chapter II of this thesis is divided into two sections. At first the German commitment to NATO is presented to show the effects this has had on Franco-German defense and security cooperation, and the establishment of an ESDI. The second half of the chapter examines Franco-German successes and difficulties in working together to advance their own bilateral defense and security arrangements and an ESDI.

Chapters III and IV analyze the strategic cultures of Germany and France during the interwar period, the post-World War II/Cold War years, and the period from the end of the Cold War in 1989-1991 to the present, in order to present an accurate picture of both countries' national predispositions toward defense and security strategy.

Chapter V summarizes the two key dilemmas that have hindered the Franco-German efforts to establish a viable European Security and Defense Identity, and the continuing effects these dilemmas may have in limiting the prospects for the successful pursuit of an ESDI.

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<sup>12</sup> John S. Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 23.

## II. THE FRANCO-GERMAN PARTNERSHIP AND ESDI

### A. GERMANY'S COMMITMENT TO THE TRANSATLANTIC ALLIANCE

From the very beginning of the post-World War II era, West German politicians actively sought the multilateral integration of their country into a Western security alliance. As early as 1947, the Americans and the British had determined that the strategic position and economic resources of the West German zones were invaluable to the Western allies in the growing struggle against Soviet Communism. This led to the decision at the London conference in June 1948 to authorize the creation of a West German state, which triggered numerous emotional debates among the Western allies and within Germany itself.<sup>13</sup> The leader of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) in western Germany, Kurt Schumacher, wanted a unified and neutral Germany integrated within a Western European alliance that also supported neutrality over participation in the global contest between the two superpowers.<sup>14</sup> Konrad Adenauer, the leader of the more conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) Party that won the first election in the FRG, was determined that the new West German state would be firmly tied to a strong alliance of Western democracies that opposed the communist East bloc. Adenauer also accepted the division of Germany, because he believed if the West remained strong, "the illegitimate East German regime would eventually collapse."<sup>15</sup> The old option of

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<sup>13</sup> John W. Young, *Cold War Europe 1945-89: A political history* (London: Edward Arnold, 1991), 55-57. As expected, the French could only be won over to this idea by American and British assurances that the new West German government's independence would be limited by various allied controls over its resources, and continued disarmament.

<sup>14</sup> Keylor, *The Twentieth-Century World: An International History*, 277.

<sup>15</sup> Young, *Cold War Europe 1945-89: A political history*, 61.



following a separate nationalistic course was not left open to the German politicians, nor was it accepted by most of the German people after the Second World War.<sup>16</sup>

What followed from the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany in the spring of 1949 was the development of a continued belief by FRG officials that German interests were best served through the multilateral integration of their country in the transatlantic alliance with the United States, Canada, and other West European powers.<sup>17</sup> This is a belief undiminished by the end of the Cold War and the reunification of Germany.

The toughest internal issue involving the pro-Western policy of the FRG has been resolving which part of the Alliance should be given precedence, the U.S. or the European relationship. Although this is an issue that FRG officials have always had to weigh, it was most notably debated during the early 1960s and again in the early 1990s. The first of these debates stemmed from the initiatives by General de Gaulle to reduce the West European reliance on the United States, replacing the American leadership position with French influence. To realize his goal of "French hegemony in Western Europe," de Gaulle used a combination of rapprochement and pressure on FRG leaders to gain their support.<sup>18</sup> It is also important to note that there were a number of key reasons for Adenauer to be receptive to de Gaulle's offers of reconciliation during the early 1960s.

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<sup>16</sup> Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, 61.

<sup>17</sup> Philip H. Gordon, *France, Germany, and the Western Alliance* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1995), 11.

<sup>18</sup> Sir Michael Howard, "A Europe of the Three: The Historical Context," *Parameters* XXIV, no. 4 (Winter 1994-95): 45.

The building of the Berlin Wall in August 1961, the increasing threat of nuclear war between the superpowers, mistrust of President Kennedy's "flexible response" doctrine and concerns that he would pursue détente with Moscow at Germany's expense, as well as the internal problems of Adenauer's government, such as the Strauss affair with *Der Spiegel* magazine at the end of 1962, and the SPD's growing willingness to talk with the Eastern bloc, all drew the West German Chancellor closer to the French President.<sup>19</sup>

However, when Ludwig Erhard replaced Konrad Adenauer as the West German Chancellor in 1963, the pro-American views of the "Atlanticists" overcame those of the "Gaullist" camp. The West German government had decided that American protection was more certain than what the French could offer.<sup>20</sup> Ironically, U.S. President Johnson ensured Erhard's downfall in 1966, by forcing the Germans to buy military hardware from America to offset U.S. defense costs in Germany. Erhard looked weak on the world stage, and the tax increases he proposed in order to pay for the military equipment caused him to lose the support of the Free Democrats Party (FDP), which was the junior coalition partner with the CDU. Without the FDP's support, "his foreign policy questioned, and even his reputation as an economic wizard tarnished," Erhard had to resign.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Young, *Cold War Europe 1945-89: A political history*, 65. In October 1962 the magazine *Der Spiegel* printed an article, based on classified material, which exposed problems in Defense Minister Franz Josef Strauss's policies. In response, Adenauer and Strauss not only had the magazine's offices searched but also arrested its editor, which led to a public outcry and the FDP ministers left the government coalition until Strauss resigned.

<sup>20</sup> Klaus Hildebrand, *German Foreign Policy from Bismarck to Adenauer: The limits of statecraft* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 203-204.

<sup>21</sup> Young, *Cold War Europe 1945-89: A political history*, 66-67.

The early 1990s debate about Germany's priorities of commitment to the transatlantic alliance vs. Europe began with a series of broad Franco-German proposals "for creating a true European security identity within the framework of the European Community," which would be "formed around the Western European Union (WEU)."<sup>22</sup> However, the debate gained considerable momentum when, on October 14, 1991, President Mitterrand of France and Chancellor Kohl of Germany announced their proposal to build a "European army corps" around the existing Franco-German brigade. Belgium, Luxembourg, and Spain were supportive of the "Eurocorps" idea. In contrast, Italy, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States disliked the proposal either because of the bilateral way in which it was conceived, or because it was viewed as a potential threat to NATO.<sup>23</sup>

The leaders of many European nations still believed that the European defense and security efforts should remain under NATO's control, and they were unenthusiastic about the European Union gaining a role in defense. These countries were also concerned that European defense efforts would duplicate those of NATO and that European attempts to gain military autonomy would send a message to the United States that it was no longer needed in European affairs. They worried that a new WEU command arrangement would confuse those already in place under NATO's integrated commands and argued that it would be excessively costly for Europe to attempt to do alone what it was already doing together with the United States. For the smaller countries in particular,

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<sup>22</sup> Gordon, *France, Germany, and the Western Alliance*, 40.

<sup>23</sup> Howorth, "France," in Howorth and Menon, eds., *The European Union and National Defense Policy*, 26.

there was also a concern that an EU security structure would be dominated by a Franco-German axis: these countries preferred "to entrust their security to the distant, powerful, and more disinterested United States than to the French and the Germans."<sup>24</sup>

The intensity of disquiet that the Eurocorps announcement caused in the United States was expressed most clearly at the Rome NATO summit in early November 1991, when President George Bush stated: "If, my friends, your ultimate aim is to provide independently for your own defense, the time to tell us is today."<sup>25</sup> Washington indeed saw the proposal for forming a European corps as a clear challenge to NATO's primacy. As John S. Duffield has noted:

It [the Eurocorps] would duplicate the alliance's existing capabilities and possibly reduce its operational effectiveness. By diverting scarce defense resources, it would necessarily diminish the European commitment to NATO. And it might undermine public support for NATO in the United States and intensify Congressional pressure to accelerate the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the continent. Thus, all in all, it threatened to cause NATO to unravel.<sup>26</sup>

In France, the Eurocorps proposal appeared acceptable to all of the major political factions. In fact, the French emphasis on developing a European Security and Defense Identity and forming the Eurocorps was the result of France's discomfort over the rapid military changes within NATO, which were meant to produce both the capabilities and legal authority for intervention abroad. "French leaders argued that to allow NATO to

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<sup>24</sup> Philip H. Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 173.

<sup>25</sup> George Bush quoted in Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, 135-136.

<sup>26</sup> Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, 136.

take the lead in organizing security in Eastern Europe or the Third World is to short-circuit the growing potential for other, more appropriate bodies, such as the United Nations, the European Community, and the CSCE, to take on those roles.”<sup>27</sup> The broadening of NATO’s geographical and political scope would also give Washington an excuse to maintain and expand its leadership role in Europe, which the French strongly disliked.<sup>28</sup> The Eurocorps proposal was partially a French reaction to NATO forming the ACE Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC), which was not given an explicit “out-of area” role and could not be called a formal expansion of NATO, but was clearly a first step in this direction. As Philip H. Gordon has noted:

France saw the creation of the RRC as a blatant attempt to preempt the creation of a more autonomous European security structure and instead to bring European forces under the aegis of the United Kingdom, United States, and NATO. French officials were apparently ‘livid’ about what they saw as an ‘Anglo-Saxon’ move to act within NATO before Europe had a chance to develop its own proposals.<sup>29</sup>

In Germany, the only negative reaction to forming the Eurocorps came from the SPD. The leaders of the main opposition party argued against the integration of German forces in any international structures except NATO or for their possible use by the U.N. However, from the main German point of view, neither the Eurocorps nor any other defense and security projects Germany has initiated with France should be seen as a threat to the Atlantic Alliance. On the contrary, German officials have repeatedly asserted that their cooperation with France in support of a European Security and Defense Identity

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<sup>27</sup> Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 170-171.

<sup>28</sup> Howorth, “France,” in Howorth and Menon, *The European Union and National Defense Policy*, 26.

<sup>29</sup> Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 171.

is meant to strengthen the European contribution to NATO, not to develop a completely independent capability to replace the alliance. Also, German officials often point out that they are "drawing France closer to NATO" through steps that the French are not willing to initiate themselves.<sup>30</sup> In a sense, Germany is acting as a conduit for greater Euro-Atlantic integration. For the Germans, the continued multilateral integration of their country in NATO while working toward the establishment of a more unified Europe at the same time is not contradictory, but provides the surest means by which stability and peace in Europe can be maintained.<sup>31</sup>

Throughout the rest of 1991 and 1992, the details of the Eurocorps concept were worked out among the chief military officials of France, Germany, and the United States, resulting in an accord approved by the North Atlantic Council on December 22, 1992, that recognized the Eurocorps as an accepted means by which the Europeans could contribute more to their own security. Moreover, as part of the accord, France agreed with Germany and the United States to make the Eurocorps available for use by NATO as well as the EC.<sup>32</sup>

**B. FRANCO-GERMAN COOPERATION TOWARD THE DEVELOPMENT OF A EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENSE IDENTITY**

Despite the traditional debate over German priorities to the Atlantic Alliance vs. Europe, it would be difficult to point out another European country that has been more

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<sup>30</sup> Howard, "A Europe of the Three: The Historical Context," 47.

<sup>31</sup> Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, 220-222.

<sup>32</sup> Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe's Strategic Choices*, 221-222.

committed to furthering European integration than the Federal Republic of Germany. Since the founding of the FRG in 1949, there have been numerous examples to support this judgement, and most of these involve the development of the Franco-German relationship, especially in the area of defense and security cooperation. The first of these examples stemmed from the U.S. call for the establishment of armed forces in the FRG in October 1950, following the outbreak of the Korean War earlier that year. The French reaction to the U.S. proposal became known as the Pleven Plan, named after the French Prime Minister who called for the formation of a European Defense Community (EDC) "that would integrate French and German military forces into a common European army."<sup>33</sup> The first West German chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, saw the EDC proposal as a way in which the FRG could be accepted as an equal partner in an integrated Europe, and became a strong supporter of the Pleven Plan. The equality with their former German enemy that the EDC represented proved too much for the French, however and, after a long debate, the plan was finally rejected by their parliament in 1954. Despite this failure, West Germany did acquire national military forces in 1955 through another solution that integrated the FRG in NATO and the WEU.<sup>34</sup>

Except for some exploratory talks on developing nuclear technology together in the late 1950s, the next period that advanced Franco-German security and defense cooperation did not come until Charles de Gaulle returned to power in France in 1958. Chancellor Adenauer and the French president shared a mistrust of American reliability,

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<sup>33</sup> Gordon, *France, Germany, and the Western Alliance*, 12.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 12. Of these two defense organizations, the WEU "became little more than a European forum to control German rearmament."

and wanted to create a more independent European defense capability. In the last years of the Eisenhower administration, American defense theorists were severely criticizing the "all or nothing" strategy of massive retaliation. Under the Kennedy administration, this outmoded doctrine was replaced by a new approach called "flexible response," which relied "on variety of military measures – conventional, tactical nuclear, or strategic nuclear – to counter Soviet aggression in Western Europe."<sup>35</sup> The new strategy seemed to acknowledge that the threat of nuclear retaliation was no longer a credible deterrent when the United States was now in range of Soviet missiles. The European reaction to Kennedy's "flexible response" doctrine was very negative, as Keylor has pointed out:

...by reserving maximum flexibility for the American president to determine the time, place, and manner of a military response to Soviet action, it inevitably heightened insecurity among America's European allies, who had become accustomed to depending on the certainty of an unconditional American guarantee. Many observers in Europe interpreted the new doctrine as a thinly disguised effort to renege on the pledge of nuclear retaliation against a Soviet conventional attack.<sup>36</sup>

The culminating point of de Gaulle's and Adenauer's efforts to promote French and German reconciliation, develop their own common approach for the defense of Western Europe, and institutionalize Franco-German defense cooperation was the signing of the Elysée Treaty in January 1963. However, the relationship between the two countries had begun to regress well before this date. The primary causes of the breakdown included de Gaulle's unacceptable intentions to strengthen the French leadership position in Western Europe at the expense of the FRG, and the final

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<sup>35</sup> Keylor, *The Twentieth-Century World: An International History*, 328.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 328.



unwillingness of the Western Germans “to lose touch with the Americans.”<sup>37</sup> The West German *Bundestag* had even refused to ratify the Elysée Treaty without attaching a preamble to it stating the FRG’s “unwavering commitment to NATO and the British participation in the EEC.”<sup>38</sup> The combination of this preamble, the replacement of Adenauer with Erhard in October 1963, and other subsequent victories of the Atlanticists over the Gaullists in the tense West German disputes of 1964 effectively put an end to de Gaulle’s chances of gaining support from the FRG for his causes, and once more limited Franco-German cooperation until the mid-1970s.<sup>39</sup>

Chancellor Ludwig Erhard preferred to work much more closely with Washington than with Paris, despite his own misgivings about the U.S. commitment to Europe. Erhard’s negotiations with President Lyndon Johnson on the Multilateral Force (MLF), a proposal to create a fleet of surface vessels equipped with Polaris A-3 nuclear missiles that never came to fruition, and his role in establishing the FRG’s involvement in coordinating NATO’s nuclear doctrine through the creation of the Alliance’s Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) in 1965 were influential in ending de Gaulle’s attempts to develop an independent and self-assertive Europe with German help.<sup>40</sup>

There was only some limited Franco-German arms collaboration in the late 1960s. Although Chancellor Willy Brandt was not an ardent Atlanticist like Erhard had been, his

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<sup>37</sup> Howard, “A Europe of the Three: The Historical Context,” 46.

<sup>38</sup> Gordon, *France, Germany, and the Western Alliance*, 14. De Gaulle had rejected Great Britain’s application to join the European Economic Community one week before the Elysée Treaty was signed.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>40</sup> Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe’s Strategic Choices, 1955-1995*, 55-58.

main priority in the early 1970s was advancing new West German relationships with East European states, not France. In fact, Brandt's *Ostpolitik* policies conflicted with "France's own (self-designated) role as the special interlocutor of the Communist half of Europe."<sup>41</sup> Then after 1974, when Helmut Schmidt replaced Brandt, Franco-German cooperation began to advance again. However, the leaders of the two countries, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing of France and Schmidt of Germany, were brought together more because of the urgent economic matters arising from the 1973 oil price increases, than for reasons of defense cooperation. In 1974, "Franco-German consolidation and coordination focused on combating inflation and forestalling protectionism; during 1975, the main problem was restoring economic growth after the deflationary measures of the preceding year."<sup>42</sup>

Although he was an Atlanticist when it came to West Germany's defense posture, Schmidt welcomed President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's efforts within France to renew support for the commitment to German and European security, eliminating what had become a French distinction "between the battle for Germany and the battle for France."<sup>43</sup> In July 1974, the agreement that contained the terms of reference for the joint contingency planning from the Second French Corps in West Germany was extended to the First French Army in its entirety, making French participation in the defense of West Germany more practical and effective. "Giscard d'Estaing also increased French

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<sup>41</sup> David S. Yost, "Franco-German Defense Cooperation," in Stephen F. Szabo, ed., *The Bundeswehr and Western Security* (London: Macmillan, 1990), 220.

<sup>42</sup> Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe's Strategic Choices, 1955-1995*, 123.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 123-125.

investments in conventional force modernization, partly as a consequence of his dialogues on strategic affairs with Schmidt.”<sup>44</sup>

Franco-German cooperation received another boost when President Jimmy Carter cancelled the deployment of the neutron bomb to the FRG in 1978. This incident had put the Schmidt government at great political risk, raised fears about U.S. reliability once again, and reinvigorated French and German desires to create a European security and defense capability to supplement NATO.<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, this period of Franco-German cooperation also became unsustainable by the end of the 1970s. Several events – French retraction based on conservative fears that Giscard d’Estaing was “selling out France’s hard-fought independence,” the controversy that began in 1979 surrounding the potential deployment of U.S. intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) to West Germany and other Western European countries, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the same year, and the Soviet crackdown in Poland in 1981 – served to remind the West Germans that their best ally was still the United States.<sup>46</sup>

At the end of 1982, the two new leaders of France and Germany were working together to revive Franco-German security and defense cooperation. Although Helmut Kohl of Germany was a conservative Christian Democrat and Francois Mitterrand was the leader of the French Socialist Party, both men were strong supporters of NATO, nuclear deterrence, and a hard-line policy toward the Soviets. The first important steps

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<sup>44</sup> Yost, “Franco-German Defense Cooperation,” in Szabo, ed., *The Bundeswehr and Western Security*, 220-221.

<sup>45</sup> Gordon, *France, Germany, and the Western Alliance*, 16-17.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

taken by Kohl and Mitterrand were the implementation of the Elysée Treaty defense clauses, and the establishment of a commission for institutionalizing the exchange of French and German ideas on defense and security policy. The first success of this commission was an improvement in French-German military-industrial cooperation. The next key step was the relaunching of the WEU in 1984, with Mitterrand appearing more sincere than his predecessors about establishing a “European pillar” to supplement and not undermine NATO. The French President also gave other support to the German Chancellor, by publicly endorsing the Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missile deployments in Germany, and by creating the *Force d' Action Rapide* (FAR) that could intervene more quickly in Central Europe than any preexisting French military forces.<sup>47</sup>

In the mid-1980s, as the United States negotiated with the Soviet Union on arms control and even bargained with Gorbachev about the U.S. nuclear guarantee to NATO Europe, Kohl and Mitterrand became more determined to increase Franco-German defense cooperation.<sup>48</sup> In October 1986, at the summit conference in Reykjavik, Iceland, U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev “– without any prior consultation with their respective allies – came to the verge of endorsing a remarkable proposal that would have abolished all ballistic missiles and possibly set the stage for total nuclear disarmament.”<sup>49</sup> Even though this scheme did not come to fruition, the two superpower leaders signed a historic agreement in Washington on 8 December 1987,

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<sup>47</sup> Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe's Strategic Choices, 1955-1995*, 141-147.

<sup>48</sup> Gordon, *France, Germany, and the Western Alliance*, 19.

<sup>49</sup> Keylor, *The Twentieth-Century World: An International History*, 453.

which eliminated all their intermediate-range ground-based missiles, including those in Europe.<sup>50</sup> In September 1987, partly in response to the U.S.-Soviet negotiations, France and West Germany conducted the largest joint military maneuvers in the history of their partnership. Operation Bold Sparrow was a purely Franco-German exercise outside the NATO structure that took place on German and French territory, placed French troops under German command for the first time, and demonstrated the capabilities of the FAR.<sup>51</sup> Yet, no matter how much exercises such as Bold Sparrow seemed to be advancing the partnership, there remained many fundamental differences between French and German views, which prevented the development of more comprehensive Franco-German defense policies and structures in the mid-1980s. From the West German side, these differences involved the possession of nuclear weapons, the projection of German military forces, the primacy of German unification, and a higher commitment to NATO than to the Franco-German partnership.<sup>52</sup>

At the end of the 1980s, as the reforms started by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev began to alter the international structure of the world, the focus of the Franco-German partnership also changed. The French feared that the Reagan-Gorbachev “zero option” proposal on intermediate nuclear forces (INF) in Europe and the German pursuit of “disarmament and détente” with Moscow would bring about an end to NATO’s

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 453.

<sup>51</sup> Yost, “Franco-German Defense Cooperation,” in Szabo, ed., *The Bundeswehr and Western Security*, 229.

<sup>52</sup> Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe’s Strategic Choices, 1955-1995*, 198-199.

reliance on a strategy of deterrence. Thus, Mitterrand perceived a need to offer new measures to bolster the Franco-German defense partnership and thereby "build up Western Europe's assertion of its defense interests vis-à-vis the United States," and avert German "tendencies toward neutralism" and sentiments that supported the denuclearization of Europe. President Reagan's actions had also caused Chancellor Kohl to distrust American reliability, and "for the first time since joining the Atlantic Alliance, the West German government began to show an interest in developing Franco-German defense ties as a possible long-term alternative to NATO."<sup>53</sup>

On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty, January 22, 1988, Kohl and Mitterrand created the Franco-German Defense and Security Council to further improve the institutional exchange of views begun by the Commission on Security and Defense in 1982.<sup>54</sup> The council's primary functions were to be:

1. The development of common concepts in the area of defense and security.
2. The progressive harmonization of French and German positions on all questions having to do with European defense and security, including the areas of arms control and disarmament.
3. The responsibility for decisions in regards to joint military units such as the Franco-German brigade.
4. The responsibility for decisions in regards to bilateral military maneuvers, joint officer training, and other support arrangements.
5. The responsibility for the upgrading of the equipment and interoperability of the French and German armed forces, and improvement of cooperation in armament production.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 201-202.

<sup>54</sup> Yost, "Franco-German Defense Cooperation," in Szabo, ed., *The Bundeswehr and Western Security*, 221-222.

<sup>55</sup> Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe's Strategic Choices, 1955-1995*, 203-204. The creation of the Franco-German Brigade was first suggested by Bundeskanzler Kohl in June 1987.

In September 1988, another joint French-German exercise was conducted in France, and in October 1990 the 4,200-member Franco-German brigade was created. Yet regardless of the growing number of symbolic activities linking France and Germany, the partnership had not proven that it was “actually capable of making policy decisions and perhaps even executing joint military actions.”<sup>56</sup>

At the beginning of the 1990s, the Kohl government faced many new challenges associated with the end of the Cold War and the reunification of Germany as a whole and fully sovereign state. Although some of these new issues could have caused a return of more nationalistic policies, the political leaders in Bonn chose not only to maintain, but also to increase their country’s multilateral integration in European institutions. The primary German motives behind this course of action included desires to maintain the peace and allay their neighbors’ fears, to advance their own economic interests, and to be part of a stronger Europe that could compete more effectively with the rest of the world.<sup>57</sup> Thus, along with France, Germany has become one of the driving forces behind the transformation of the European Community into the European Union (EU), with the initial intent to bind the member states to each other economically. It is hoped that momentum will eventually transform the EU into a true political union, which would require a common foreign and security policy (CFSP), and common European security and defense capabilities.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Gordon, *France, Germany, and the Western Alliance*, 24.

<sup>57</sup> Franz-Josef Meiers, “Germany: The Reluctant Power,” *Survival*, vol. 37, no. 3 (Autumn 1995): 96-97.

<sup>58</sup> Howorth, “France,” in Howorth and Menon, eds., *The European Union and National Defense Policy*, 23-24.

Following the formation of the Franco-German brigade, the first major advance in the construction of a European Security and Defense Identity came when the Franco-German proposals to establish a common foreign and security policy and to make the WEU the defense arm of the EU were agreed to by the rest of the EC members in the Treaty on European Union (TEU) at Maastricht in December 1991. The other provisions in this treaty "established a timetable for the creation of a European central bank and single European currency," which were meant to increase the pace of European integration. The provisions were also important for creating a stronger foundation for the emergence of a common European defense."<sup>59</sup>

At the same time as the negotiations that led to the Maastricht agreement, another Kohl-Mitterrand proposal launched the formation of the "Eurocorps," which was to be a fully operational force of some 40,000 soldiers by late 1995. Although the initial units allocated to this new military organization were French and German, all EU members were encouraged to contribute forces to make the Eurocorps more than just a Franco-German entity. By April 1998, the Eurocorps was some 65,000 soldiers strong representing France, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Spain.<sup>60</sup>

In June 1992, the tasks for which WEU military units could be used were laid out in the Petersberg Declaration by the WEU's Council of Ministers. According to the declaration, "in addition to the continuing collective defense obligations of the WEU

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<sup>59</sup> Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe's Strategic Choices, 1955-1995*, 220.

<sup>60</sup> Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers News Release (27 April 1998), 1. The Eurocorps Headquarters deployed personnel for the first time in July 1998, consisting of a 147 member peacekeeping contingent to Bosnia as part of the Stabilization Force.



members under the 1948 Brussels Treaty and the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty, 'military units of the WEU member States, acting under the authority of the WEU, could be employed for: humanitarian and rescue tasks; peacekeeping tasks; [and] tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacekeeping'."<sup>61</sup> Thus, with the Petersberg Declaration, it became clear that the WEU military units such as the Eurocorps could be used for both collective defense and collective security missions and, with the North Atlantic Council's decision in December 1992, such units could perform these missions under the auspices of NATO or the WEU in situations when NATO would be "neither willing nor able to intervene."<sup>62</sup>

The next major step that contributed to advancing the development of an ESDI came at the NATO Summit in January 1994, when a new institutional mechanism called Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTFs) was accepted as a way to provide NATO assets for use in a WEU-led operation, "or [by] 'coalitions of the willing' composed of self-selected Allies and non-NATO countries."<sup>63</sup> However, as had happened so many times before, this highly productive period for the development of an ESDI was followed by a decrease in activity until the Kohl government mounted a new campaign in 1996 to improve the EU decision-making process on security issues, and to tighten the relationship between

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<sup>61</sup> Western European Union, Council of Ministers, Bonn, June 19, 1992, "Petersberg Declaration," par. 4 of Part II, "On Strengthening WEU's Operational Role," quoted in David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998), 209.

<sup>62</sup> Jonathan G. Clarke, "The Eurocorps: A Fresh Start in Europe," *Cato Institute Foreign Policy Briefing*, no.21 (28 December 1992): 3. Available [Online]: [<http://www.cato.org/pubs/pbriefs/fpb-021es.html>], October 1998.

<sup>63</sup> Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security*, 2.

the WEU and the EU.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, at the NATO Defense Ministers Meeting in June 1996, the establishment of a European Security and Defense Identity within NATO was reaffirmed with strong German and French support.<sup>65</sup>

In the mid and late 1990s, as the establishment of a single European currency and other economic and political developments by the EU began to pick up momentum, and military operations in the Balkans intensified, cooperation among European Union members on a CFSP and an ESDI became even more important. Thus, the fundamental differences among the French, the Germans and other EU members concerning their views on European security started to be worked out in greater detail, and the British government began to take more interest in an ESDI within NATO as well.<sup>66</sup>

At the end of the 1990s and beginning of the twenty-first century, the new leaders of France and Germany, Jacques Chirac and Gerhard Schroeder, have vowed that their governments will continue to support and advance what their predecessors have accomplished through a close Franco-German partnership.<sup>67</sup> One of those early Franco-German initiatives, the Eurocorps, has steadily progressed. On 18 April 2000, the commanding general of the Eurocorps, Juan Ortuno of Spain, along with 350 members of his staff from the Corps' headquarters located in Strasbourg, France, became the primary

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<sup>64</sup> Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, 129-132.

<sup>65</sup> Guillaume Parmentier, "Painstaking Adaptation to the New Europe: French and German Defense Policies in 1997," in *France and Japan in a Changing Security Environment*, Les Cahiers de l'IFRI no. 21 (Paris: Institut Francais des Relations Internationales and Tokyo: Japan Institute of International Affairs, 1997), 30-31.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 33-34.

<sup>67</sup> John Grimond, "Germany: The burden of normality," *The Economist* (February 6, 1999): 16-17.

command and control element for the 46,000 strong NATO-led force in Kosovo (KFOR).<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Kristian Kahrs, "Eurocorps Assumes Command of KFOR," *KFOR Online*, 19 April 2000, Available [Online]: [[http://kforonline.com/news/report/nr\\_19apr00.htm](http://kforonline.com/news/report/nr_19apr00.htm)], April 2000.

### III. GERMAN STRATEGIC CULTURE

#### A. THE INTERWAR YEARS, 1918-1939

If dramatic events can change a people's political and strategic culture, there are few examples better than Germany's twentieth century experiences to illustrate this point. The devastation of two world wars, foreign occupation, partitioning and the Cold War have indeed contributed many significant changes to the ways in which the Germans relate to the rest of the world. However, the First World War contributed the least to advancing the aspects of German strategic culture oriented to international cooperation and enhanced militaristic and nationalistic tendencies. As Richard Bessel has noted:

Despite the antipathy towards war and the military which 'the years 1914-18' had generated, the most bloody and futile war which Germany had yet experienced was followed not by more conciliatory patterns of political life but by an upsurge in violence and military practices in civil politics: by military ideologies, by military forms of political organization, by the activities of uniformed formations which sought to recreate an idealized military community in civil society.<sup>69</sup>

The reason why the Germans were unable to overcome extreme nationalism and militarism in the interwar years can be attributed to the inconclusive way in which the First World War ended and the harsh terms of the Versailles Treaty.<sup>70</sup> Many Germans preferred to believe that their military forces had not been defeated in the field and could have gone on fighting until victorious, if only they had not been stabbed in the back.

Martin Wight, the British historian and international relations expert, wrote:

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<sup>69</sup> Richard Bessel, *Germany After the First World War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 260-261.

<sup>70</sup> Hajo Holborn, "The Struggle for New Position: Diplomats and Diplomacy in the Early Weimar Republic," in Gordon A. Craig and Felix Gilbert, eds., *The Diplomats 1919-1939* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1953), 145.

The obvious...aspect of the Nazi movement was that of a national revival after defeat. Its most potent myths in conquering Germany were those of the *Dolchstoß in den Ruecken*, the army stabbed in the back by the civilian November traitors, the fiction that Germany had not been militarily defeated in the First World War; and of the *Versailler Diktat*, the Allies imposing mutilation, servitudes, and tribute upon Germany by force and treachery. Its most potent claim in recovering for Germany the position to dominate Europe was *Gleichberechtigung*, the restoration of Germany's equality of rights in the international community, the ending of the servitudes of Versailles.<sup>71</sup>

Such a myth made the preservation of democracy extremely hard for the fledgling Weimar government, which was unfairly blamed for the loss of the war and for not obtaining better terms for Germany at Versailles.<sup>72</sup> This, in turn, caused a significant amount of social and political chaos, in which various political organizations from both the Left and the Right openly challenged the legitimacy of the government, often making attempts to overthrow it.<sup>73</sup> Many of the leaders of these rival political organizations on the Right were former military men who gained public support, because the military had not been discredited by the outcome of the war and even continued to be revered by most Germans.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, many of the leading politicians of the Weimar Republic found it impossible to accept the terms of the Versailles Treaty, and some of them did everything

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<sup>71</sup> Martin Wight, "Germany," in Arnold Toynbee and Frank T. Ashton-Gwatkin, eds., *Survey of International Affairs 1939-1946, The World in March 1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), 295.

<sup>72</sup> Hajo Holborn, "The Struggle for New Position: Diplomats and Diplomacy in the Early Weimar Republic," in Craig and Gilbert, eds., *The Diplomats 1919-1939*, 126. It was General Erich Friedrich Wilhelm Ludendorff, the virtual dictator of Germany during the last years of World War I, who "...had to admit defeat in late September 1918 and suddenly demanded a parliamentary German government to conclude an armistice and peace."

<sup>73</sup> Michael Geyer, "German Strategy in the Age of Machine Warfare, 1914-1945," in Peter Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986), 552-554.

<sup>74</sup> Keylor, *The Twentieth-Century World: An International History*, 114.

possible to circumvent the restrictions on Germany. One of the first Chancellors of the new Republic, Joseph Wirth, approved of General Hans von Seeckt's independent policy of training *Reichswehr* soldiers on Russian soil, out of view of the French and other Allied Powers.<sup>75</sup>

The secret military arrangements with the Soviets, which began in the winter of 1920-21 and were strengthened by the Rappallo Treaty in 1922, also allowed the German army "to engage in the production and testing of military aircraft, tanks, poison gases, and other weapons outlawed by the Versailles Treaty."<sup>76</sup> In turn, this clandestine program of rearmament, which was approved by successive Weimar governments throughout the 1920s, would provide Hitler with a solid base from which to complete the reconstruction of Germany's military might.<sup>77</sup>

The most astute of the Weimar politicians was Gustav Stresemann, who, as the German Chancellor in 1923 and later the Foreign Minister from November 1923 until his premature death in October 1929, appeared to be working for the peaceful reintegration of Germany into Europe under the restrictions of the Versailles Treaty. Yet at the same time, Stresemann was setting the stage for reclaiming lost eastern territories, secretly rebuilding the German military with Soviet assistance, and making another attempt at the old German goal of dominating eastern Europe. In other words, German foreign policy

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<sup>75</sup> Hajo Holborn, "The Struggle for New Position: Diplomats and Diplomacy in the Early Weimar Republic," in Craig and Gilbert, eds., *The Diplomats 1919-1939*, 150. General von Seeckt was the leader of the German army in the early 1920s, first *Chef der Heeresleitung* (chief of the Army Command).

<sup>76</sup> Keylor, *The Twentieth-Century World: An International History*, 115.

<sup>77</sup> Wight, "Germany," in Toynbee and Ashton-Gwatkin, eds., *Survey of International Affairs 1936-1946, The World in March 1939*, 314.

under Stresemann and other Weimar political leaders in the 1920s was a revival of *Schaukelpolitik*, pitting west against east and vice versa as the need suited.<sup>78</sup>

Before Stresemann began his new approach to resolve Germany's political problems, the attempts by earlier Weimar governments to negotiate with the Allied Powers concerning the impracticability of reparation payments had turned to passive resistance. The fear of losing the Rhineland to the French and the rest of Germany to Bolshevism almost turned this passiveness into active resistance by the ultra-radicals of the Right.<sup>79</sup> Then in the mid-1920s, Gustav Stresemann persuaded the most powerful members of German society, the industrialists, to help stabilize the economy and make an "attempt to reach an understanding with the foreign Powers."<sup>80</sup> Of all the allied countries, the United States quickly proved to be the most receptive to German efforts to improve Berlin's relationship with the West. Washington's participation in implementing the Versailles Treaty had ended with the departure of America's Rhine occupation forces in January 1923, mostly due to what the Americans considered extreme attempts by the French to make Germany abide by the terms of the Versailles Treaty.<sup>81</sup> By 1924, the United States was ready to participate in repudiating the "Carthaginian peace" that Versailles represented. Stresemann's first success with American support was negotiating

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<sup>78</sup> Klaus Hildebrand, *Das vergangene Reich: Deutsche Aussenpolitik von Bismarck bis Hitler 1871-1945* (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt GmbH., 1995), 438-474.

<sup>79</sup> Andreas Hillgruber, *Deutsche Grossmacht- und Weltpolitik im 19. Jahrhundert*, 2nd ed. (Duesseldorf, Germany: Droste Verlag GmbH., 1979), 134-138.

<sup>80</sup> Hajo Holborn, "The Struggle for New Position: Diplomats and Diplomacy in the Early Weimar Republic," in Craig and Gilbert, eds., *The Diplomats 1919-1939*, 156-157.

<sup>81</sup> Keith L. Nelson, *Victors Divided, America and the Allies in Germany, 1918-1923* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), 231-249.

the Dawes Plan in 1924, which was the first major revision of the Versailles Treaty to Germany's advantage; it helped reduce the German debt and the "coercive power of the French-dominated Reparations Commission."<sup>82</sup>

Stresemann's second great accomplishment with U.S. assistance, the Locarno Treaty of 1925, came as a result of his understanding that he could achieve some of Germany's most important foreign policy objectives by making concessions to the West and satisfying French security concerns. This meant acknowledging the loss of Alsace-Lorraine to France and accepting the demilitarized status of the Rheinland, which Germany agreed to in the Locarno Treaty. In return for these concessions, the French agreed to evacuate their military forces from the Rheinland, and to reduce the size and authority of the Allied inspection team once the Germans showed some measure of good faith in regards to fulfilling the disarmament provisions of the Versailles Treaty.<sup>83</sup> However, the Locarno Treaty made no reference to a specific German agreement to continue disarmament, or to recognize Germany's borders with Poland and Czechoslovakia.<sup>84</sup> Therefore, the Western Powers had left the way open for Stresemann and his successors to continue Germany's clandestine rearmament even more secure from Allied observation, and to eventually pursue plans of gaining territorial compensation in Eastern Europe.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Keylor, *The Twentieth-Century World: An International History*, 113.

<sup>83</sup> Hildebrand, *Das vergangene Reich: Deutsche Aussenpolitik von Bismarck bis Hitler 1871-1945*, 275-482.

<sup>84</sup> Gottfried Niedhardt, *Die Aussenpolitik der Weimarer Republik* (Munich, Germany: 1999), 53-56.

<sup>85</sup> Hajo Holborn, "The Struggle for New Position: Diplomats and Diplomacy in the Early Weimar Republic," in Craig and Gilbert, eds., *The Diplomats 1919-1939*, 163.



The other main condition in the Locarno Treaty was that it would not enter into force until Germany was admitted into the League of Nations. This occurred on September 10, 1926, finally returning Germany to a position in which to “participate on an equal footing with the victorious Allies in the deliberations concerning the future of Europe.”<sup>86</sup> This was also the beginning of what the British government then deemed to be the surest way of guaranteeing the security of Europe. The British favored “appeasement of Germany’s grievances and her readmission to the ranks of peace-loving powers,” while the French believed “that their security depended on keeping Germany as weak as possible for the foreseeable future.”<sup>87</sup> The British were well-intentioned, but the French suspicions about Stresemann’s motives for resolving the political disputes with Paris and London were well-founded.

By the beginning of the 1930s, the German experiment with democracy was already nearing its end, due to the inherent weaknesses of the Weimar Republic, increasing German revisionism, and the enduring stigma of the Versailles Treaty. Then, as the economic situation darkened once more with the spread of the Great Depression, Hitler saw his opportunity to take advantage of the crumbling Weimar government to legally become the leader of the German people.<sup>88</sup> The Munich *putsch* in 1923 had been a premature attempt to seize control by force, but this was followed by ten years of Nazi consolidation and an adherence to legality, which gained Hitler the support of Germany’s

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<sup>86</sup> Keylor, *The Twentieth-Century World: An International History*, 119.

<sup>87</sup> Howard, “A Europe of the Three: The Historical Context,” 43.

<sup>88</sup> Hildebrand, *Das vergangene Reich: Deutsche Aussenpolitik von Bismarck bis Hitler*, 509-516.

socioeconomic elite: the East Prussian landowners, industrialists, and high-ranking military officers.<sup>89</sup>

Hitler's success with the German people was based on a mix of popular rhetoric, or propaganda, promising to relieve them of their economic burdens, to protect them from the communists and the Jews, and to reverse the wrongs perpetrated on Germany through the Versailles Treaty.<sup>90</sup> Moreover, Hitler's rhetoric called on certain then-prominent norms of German strategic culture, such as nationalism and militarism, to add greater legitimacy to his dictatorial regime and its agenda. As Richard Bessel and Martin Wight have put it:

Nazi mobilization was not based upon realistic discussion of social needs and economic priorities; Nazi propaganda was a successful attempt to transcend such discussion, to 'elevate' politics to the level of myth and fiction.<sup>91</sup>

The Nazi Revolution...gathered up all the forces of German history, the military fanaticism of the Prussian army, the unscrupulous tenacity of the Junkers and their hatred of the Poles, the demand for economic empire of the industrialists and their middle-class supporters, the 'Austrian mission' wherewith the Habsburg Monarchy had justified its ascendancy in Eastern Europe, giving all these a demonic drive and intensity through a mass support they had not previously possessed.<sup>92</sup>

From January 1933 to the end of the Second World War, Germany's foreign policy and the internal control of the Reich were firmly in the hands of Adolf Hitler and

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<sup>89</sup> Wight, "Germany," in Toynbee and Ashton-Gwatkin, eds., *Survey of International Affairs 1939-1946, The World in March 1939*, 312-313.

<sup>90</sup> Barzini, *The Europeans*, 80.

<sup>91</sup> Bessel, *Germany After the First World War*, 282.

<sup>92</sup> Wight, "Germany," in Toynbee and Ashton-Gwatkin, eds., *Survey of International Affairs 1939-1946, The World in March 1939*, 298-299.

his Nazi party deputies. The Germans that were not deceived by National Socialism either had to remain silent and hope for an eventual return of normality, or leave the country. Many writers, artists, political leaders, scientists and other intellectuals, of Jewish as well as non-Jewish descent, left Germany throughout the 1930s; staying meant that one risked being placed in a concentration camp.<sup>93</sup>

It wasn't until 1945 that the Germans could collectively begin to decide just how far Hitler had led them astray, using many elements of their historic strategic culture and the racist militarism that grew out of "total mobilization" in the First World War. As Michael Geyer has commented:

...for the National Socialists war was a way of life. National Socialist war was war for the sake of social reconstruction through the destruction of conquered societies. Total discretionary power over subjugated people was to maintain and guarantee the social life organization of the Germans. A terrorist racism became the essence of National Socialist politics as its leaders strove toward war. In their mind, it was the foundation on which the war-making capabilities of the Third Reich rested, just as its expansion was the major goal that war would achieve.<sup>94</sup>

## **B. THE POST-WORLD WAR II AND COLD WAR YEARS, 1946-1989**

Due to the disastrous experiences of the Hitler regime and the Second World War, much of Germany's previous political and strategic culture was destroyed along with its proponents, and the Germans became much more receptive to "alternative beliefs and values, creating a situation in which a new political culture could take root."<sup>95</sup> Thus, the

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<sup>93</sup> William Manchester, *Winston Spencer Churchill, The Last Lion Alone 1932-1940*, (New York: Dell Publishing Group, 1988), 87.

<sup>94</sup> Geyer, "German Strategy in the Age of Machine Warfare, 1914-1945," in Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, 566.

<sup>95</sup> Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, 61.

extreme nationalism and militarism of the past was replaced by a new set of principles accepted by a substantial majority of the German political elite, which John S. Duffield has identified as the following:

1. The acceptance of the idea that the German nation-state is part of "a larger European entity."
2. The strong belief that "international disputes can be resolved peacefully."
3. The strong preference for economic and political integration as a means to promote European stability.
4. The realization that multilateralism and integration serve "concrete German interests" much better than pursuing "a separate national course."<sup>96</sup>

In the case of the first principle, the idea that Germany was part of a European system was not new in 1945-46. This idea had been on everyone's mind well before the German states were united as one country in 1871, and especially during the time of the Third Reich. What had been reinforced by the disasters of following an intensely nationalistic course was the belief among the Germans themselves that European integration was the best way to limit the destructive powers of nationalism. In fact, after the Second World War, the West Germans wanted "to be as inconspicuous as possible and to demonstrate the fact that they were just a western European nation like all the others."<sup>97</sup> Over time, the belief that Germany's vital national interests also coincided with furthering a highly integrated Europe took hold in Bonn and became "one of the foundations of German political culture."<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 61-65.

<sup>97</sup> Barzini, *The Europeans*, 95.

<sup>98</sup> Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, 63.

During the era of Konrad Adenauer's service as Chancellor, 1949-1963, the West German goal of becoming integrated in a larger Europe focused exclusively on the West, and Adenauer utterly rejected the idea of recognizing East German sovereignty, or negotiating with the Soviets about Moscow's idea of accepting German unification in return for neutrality. By the end of the 1960s, Chancellor Willy Brandt had established a new policy of détente with the Eastern bloc.<sup>99</sup> Brandt's *Ostpolitik* set a precedent for his successors: German leaders had to work with all of Europe, East and West, for the good of Germany and Europe as a whole. The pre-war view of most Germans, who "regarded inter-state relations as an intensely competitive and unforgiving struggle for existence," was replaced by one that favored peaceful cooperation.<sup>100</sup>

The second principle, the view that international disputes can be resolved peacefully, took on many different forms in Germany's political and strategic culture during the Cold War years. Two of the best examples of this view are Franco-German reconciliation via the European Coal and Steel Community, which began in 1950, and *Ostpolitik*, which started in the mid-1960s; but there are several others worth mentioning. In the early 1950s, the U.S. proposal to establish military forces in the FRG met with strong opposition from many West Germans. The Social Democratic Party (SPD) even tried to argue that rearmament and supporting NATO with German Armed Forces would violate the principles of the new German constitution, known as the Basic Law.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Young, *Cold War Europe 1945-89: A political history*, 60-72.

<sup>100</sup> Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, 62.

<sup>101</sup> Young, *Cold War Europe 1945-89: A political history*, 61-62.

When the *Bundeswehr* was finally established in 1955-56, it was for the limited purpose of national self-defense, and most West Germans felt that their country "should never again develop a significant power projection capability."<sup>102</sup> Every effort was also made to firmly ground the *Bundeswehr* in the new democratic society of West Germany. There was no longer a *Generalstab* headed by military men who could interfere in the affairs of the civilian government.<sup>103</sup> The concept of *Innere Fuehrung*, the rights of the citizen in uniform, is still an important part of the German soldier's life. Doing away with conscription, which has long been seen as a means to ground the armed forces in German society, is being hotly debated today.<sup>104</sup>

Another example of West Germany's reluctance to develop military capabilities to be used as an instrument of foreign policy involves the nuclear weapons option. Chancellor Adenauer set a precedent on this subject "at the London Nine Conference in October 1954, stating that Germany would not produce atomic, biological or chemical weapons on its territory"<sup>105</sup> Although this was a necessary precondition for West Germany's admission to NATO in 1955, it did not mean that the FRG could never cooperate with other countries to produce nuclear weapons on their soil, or one day possess such weapons if they had been made somewhere else. Thus, the West German

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<sup>102</sup> Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, 64.

<sup>103</sup> Barzini, *The Europeans*, 96.

<sup>104</sup> Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, *Soldaten in der Demokratie* (Bonn: Press- und Informationsstab, 1995), 8-9.

<sup>105</sup> Karl-Heinz Kamp, "Germany and the Future of Nuclear Weapons in Europe," in Thomas-Durell Young, ed., *Force, Statecraft and German Unity: The Struggle to Adapt Institutions and Practices* (Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania: Strategic Studies Institute Publication, 1996), 31.

politicians kept the nuclear option open, and Bonn came close to joining the nuclear weapons club on a few occasions from the late 1950s until the “Two-plus-Four Agreement” in 1990. Nevertheless, persistent doubts and resistance at home, as well as pressure from some allies, such as France, Britain and the United States, kept the FRG from becoming a nuclear weapons power.<sup>106</sup>

The Germans also demonstrated their steadfast belief in solving inter-state disputes by peaceful means through their unwavering support for the international institutions which had been developed during the Cold War era to maintain European and global stability. These institutions included not only NATO and the UN, but also the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which in 1994 became the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Community (EC), which in 1993 became the European Union (EU), and the Western European Union (WEU), which had been the agency that watched over West German military procurements.<sup>107</sup> Especially noteworthy were the efforts of Germany’s leaders to work closely with France to develop the EC, which were discussed earlier in this thesis. Additionally, the EC and the other institutions fulfilled the requirements of the third principle listed above, that the West Germans preferred economic and political integration as a means to promote stability. This belief has had the most powerful effect

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 31-33. That the FRG had an option to become a nuclear weapons power became clear in late 1957, when West German officials agreed to join a project to build nuclear weapons on French and Italian soil. This project was terminated by General de Gaulle when he returned to power in 1958.

<sup>107</sup> Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, 113.

on the FRG's foreign policy both during the Cold War and after 1989.<sup>108</sup>

The fourth principle, that multilateralism and integration serve concrete German interests much better than pursuing a separate national course, or *Sonderweg*, is also closely tied to the preceding analysis. Yet, it is important to stress what a significant change of view this is compared to what German political leaders believed before the Second World War. Unilateralism, but not in the sense that Germany went it alone, was Bismarck's way of maintaining the post-1871 equilibrium in Europe, which quickly disintegrated when he was no longer around to keep everything balanced.<sup>109</sup> However, bilateral politics or unilateralism, was not sufficiently discredited in Germany as the cause of the First World War, and German efforts to continue pursuing a special path in the interwar years led to the catastrophe that lasted from 1933 to 1945.<sup>110</sup> Since that time, "German leaders have feared the consequences of unilateralism, believing that it can lead only to diplomatic isolation, insecurity, and conflict."<sup>111</sup> The previous German inclination toward nationalism and unilateralism had been overtaken by a desire to support international cooperation and integration, even to the point of sacrificing national prerogatives.

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<sup>108</sup> Young, *Cold War Europe 1945-89: A political history*, 60-61.

<sup>109</sup> Craig and George, *Force and Statecraft: Diplomacy Problems of Our Time*, 34-50. Bismarck was not a unilateralist, in the sense that Germany went it alone; rather, he made coalitions to secure Germany's position at the expense of France and sought to preserve good relations with Russia while avoiding the worst dangers in the Habsburg-Romanov rivalry in southeast Europe.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 34-50.

<sup>111</sup> Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, 65.



A fifth and extremely important part of post-World War II German strategic culture is the strong belief in the need for American engagement in Europe to help preserve European stability. Unlike the other four principles discussed above, the idea that U.S. involvement in Europe was one of the best ways to insure the impartial resolution of conflicts in the region had already gained a certain level of acceptance in Germany during the interwar years. In fact, most Germans were upset that the Americans did not remain more engaged in Europe during the post-First World War period.<sup>112</sup> After the Second World War, this belief was reaffirmed. Indeed, maintaining the U.S. commitment to Europe became the most important goal of the West Germans throughout the Cold War period, and it has had a substantial influence on how the reunited Germany's political leaders have approached European integration in order to prevent the United States from leaving Europe again.

Finally, it is important to note that these five principles of German strategic culture were not only shaped by the effects of the Second World War, but also by the nature of the international structure during the Cold War. Initially, the Soviet threat made it necessary for the West Germans to choose integration with the West, and it was only later that they could afford to begin a policy of *détente* with the East bloc.<sup>113</sup> Constraints on German sovereignty and the choice not to become a nuclear weapons power also caused the leaders of the FRG to be exceptionally supportive of their country's integration within NATO and to develop additional security measures with their Western

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<sup>112</sup> Nelson, *Victors Divided, America and the Allies in Germany, 1918-1923*, 256.

<sup>113</sup> Young, *Cold War Europe 1945-89: A political history*, 60-72.

partners.<sup>114</sup> The negative attitudes of the rest of Europe toward Germany, based on past transgressions, also made it necessary for the FRG "to adopt policies intended to reassure its neighbors that it would never again pose a threat to them and to avoid actions that might raise new alarms."<sup>115</sup>

### C. THE END OF THE COLD WAR TO THE PRESENT, 1989-2000

No matter how closely the leaders of a unified Germany want to adhere to the principles of their nation's political and strategic culture that were developed in the post-Second World War/Cold War years, they also have to contend with the increasing regional and global responsibility that their nation is being asked to assume, especially in the area of European security. This means that the German leaders must carefully balance the increasing requirements to assert their nation's power with their commitments to greater European integration, which dissipates this power. Additionally, as Europe becomes more integrated, the German leaders must find a balance between the interests that serve their citizens at home, and those of Germany as part of a greater Europe.<sup>116</sup>

The first important debate about Germany behaving as a normal, fully sovereign power in matters of European security involved the constitutionality of using the country's military forces outside their Cold War role of national defense. Although this was a mostly tortuous debate within the FRG, old and new allies alike had quickly come to the conclusion that the Germans had to pull their own weight in multilateral efforts to

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<sup>114</sup> Kamp, "Germany and the Future of Nuclear Weapons in Europe," in Young, ed., *Force, Statecraft and German Unity: The Struggle to Adapt Institutions and Practices*, 27-29.

<sup>115</sup> Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, 43.

<sup>116</sup> Grimond, "The burden of normality," 3-4.

preserve not just European, but also global peace and stability. The Gulf War in particular, “showed that other capitals were no longer inclined to accept Germany’s ducking when military decisions had to be made.”<sup>117</sup> This debate was partially resolved on 12 July 1994, when the German Constitutional Court declared that the country’s participation in UN peacekeeping and peace-enforcement missions was constitutional.<sup>118</sup> Since this time, German military forces have been active in supporting missions under a UN mandate in Africa, the Balkans, and as far away as Southeast Asia. However, the German Constitutional Court also insured that any decision to send elements of the *Bundeswehr* outside the country to participate in such crisis management missions was kept firmly in the hands of the civilian government. Only the *Bundestag* can approve deployments, and once participation in an operation is allowed, the Federal Government decides what constraints to put on the role of the German soldiers in that operation.<sup>119</sup>

This debate about projecting military forces outside the country not only illustrates the difficulties that Germany’s politicians have had to face in making the adjustment to the post-Cold War environment, but also shows how the Germans have remained committed to their post-World War II/Cold War strategic culture and are finding ways to adapt their values and beliefs to the new international environment. On the one hand, as Duffield has argued, the Germans have been slow to accept the need to

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<sup>117</sup> Michael J. Inacker, “Power and Morality: On a New German Security Policy,” in Thomas-Durell Young, ed., *Force, Statecraft and German Unity: The Struggle to Adapt Institutions and Practices* (Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania: Strategic Studies Institute Publication, U.S. Army War College, 1996), 101.

<sup>118</sup> Ludger Kuehnhardt, “Germany’s Role in European Security,” *SAIS Review* 15, Special Issue, 1995, Available [Online]: [<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/sais-review/v015/15.3kuehnhardt.html>], December 1998.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

use military force, except in the case of national defense, in keeping with their rejection of militarism and their strong belief in "assigning absolute priority to the search for peaceful solutions to international conflicts."<sup>120</sup> On the other hand, Duffield has observed,

the strong German commitment to multilateralism, the concomitant rejection of ever pursuing a separate path, and the imperative to be a dependable partner have made it difficult for them not to respond positively to international requests for German military contributions. Not to join with Germany's allies, in the minds of many, would smack of unilateralism, harm its international reputation, and risk leading to isolation.<sup>121</sup>

The strong German preference for economic and political integration as a means to promote European stability not only survived the end of the Cold War and German unification, but also the change of governments in Bonn/Berlin. Despite worries that the new Red-Green coalition, now in charge in Germany after 16 years of Christian Democratic Union (CDU) – Free Democratic Party (FDP) rule, would follow a significantly different course on foreign policy, the opposite has been true. The new Chancellor, Gerhard Schroeder, has made the same point as his predecessor, Helmut Kohl, in declaring that Germany's aims are identical with Europe's. The Green Party leader and German Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, has gone as far as to declare "that to turn the EU into a single political state is 'the decisive task of our time.'"<sup>122</sup> There is also no reason thus far to dissent from John Grimond's assessment of the new German government in his article for *The Economist* in February 1999:

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<sup>120</sup> Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy after Unification*, 239.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 239-240.

<sup>122</sup> Grimond, "The burden of normality," 15.

In general, Germany's foreign policy will be the same as usual, only more so. It will be multilateral, not unilateral, if only because the government believes there is no big issue in foreign affairs on which a go-it-alone policy would be effective. The Germans want a seat on the UN Security Council not for themselves but for the EU. In Europe they will be integrationist. Even in the G8 they will push for more policy-coordination. They will play a bigger part in peacekeeping. And they will continue their strong friendship with America, to which they are increasingly bound through commercial and educational links, as well as diplomatic ones.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 17.

## IV. FRENCH STRATEGIC CULTURE

### A. THE INTERWAR YEARS, 1918-1939

One of the most important aspects of French political and strategic culture during the interwar years that still affects Franco-German cooperation today was the extreme atmosphere of mistrust. In fact, when the numerous German states were first joined together into a larger nation at the end of the Franco-German War of 1870-71, the French had not only lost Alsace and Lorraine, but they were confronted with a new economic and military power that they feared from then on.<sup>124</sup> Thus, after experiencing the devastation of the First World War mostly on their own soil, the French became adamant about punishing the Germans and imposing harsh restrictions on their capabilities. After the Versailles Treaty was signed, it was the French who tenaciously tried to make the Germans comply with the terms they had been forced to accept: the permanent loss of territories, the paying of crippling reparations, and restrictions on their military might. However, the French soon found that they were nearly alone in their quest to make the Germans abide by these terms. They had lost the support of the United States and Great Britain against Germany, and the French leaders could not enlist the help of the new Soviet Government. Thus, the French were forced to try another course. France established bilateral military alliances with the European states that had the most to lose from a resurgent Germany, such as Czechoslovakia and Poland. However, this strategy failed due to many problems that developed both within and among France's East European allies, and because it was a hopelessly weak and unreliable way of containing

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<sup>124</sup> Craig and George, *Force and Statecraft: Diplomacy Problems of Our Time*, 34-35.

Germany in the first place.<sup>125</sup> Unfortunately, these lessons from the interwar years served to strengthen many aspects of French strategic culture that conflict with European integration, especially the belief that France can only count on itself.

## **B. THE POST-WORLD WAR II AND COLD WAR YEARS, 1946-1989**

After the Second World War, it took some time for the French to reestablish many of the key elements of their political and strategic culture. Adherence to the “need to uphold France’s rank and status as an independent world power,” was an important part of French political rhetoric during the time of the Fourth Republic, 1946-58.<sup>126</sup> There were also attempts by French leaders to assert their independent views during the early days of the Western Alliance. As Philip H. Gordon has observed, these attempts included:

...the insistence on including ‘Algerian departments’ in the protected zone of the 1949 NATO treaty; the proposals and demands of various French governments for [a] tripartite (with Britain and the United States) direction of the alliance; the constant insistence on military superiority in continental Europe, especially over reconstructing Germany; the efforts, regardless of cost, to maintain overseas colonies and influence abroad; and, finally, the decisions taken toward the creation of a national nuclear program and strategic forces were all areas in which France refused to accept lightly the developing status quo as directed by Washington.<sup>127</sup>

Nevertheless, the individual who contributed the most to reconstituting French pride and defining France’s post-World War II strategic culture was Charles de Gaulle.

When he returned to lead France after the collapse of the Fourth Republic in 1958,

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<sup>125</sup> Keylor, *The Twentieth-Century World: An International History*, 107-110.

<sup>126</sup> David S. Yost, “France,” in Douglas J. Murray and Paul R. Viotti, eds., *The Defense Policies of Nations: A Comparative Study*, 3rd ed. (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 243.

<sup>127</sup> Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 4-5.

de Gaulle quickly established the principles that have served as a guide for the policies of all subsequent French presidents. The Gaullist principles informing French political and strategic culture, as described by Philip H. Gordon, include:

1. The preoccupation with grandeur.
2. The unwavering desire to preserve independent decision-making.
3. The unwillingness to participate in an integrated military command structure.
4. The continuing aspiration to produce a majority of French weapons in France.
5. The aversion to a reliance on allies.<sup>128</sup>

The first of these principles, the preoccupation with grandeur, refers to upholding France's historic place in Europe and the world as a great power. "As de Gaulle pointed out, France 'has acquired over one thousand five hundred years the habit of being a great power and insists that everyone, first of all its friends, not forget this.'"<sup>129</sup> There are arguments to the effect that General de Gaulle's emphasis on restoring France to the role of a world leader was necessary for the French people to recover their self respect and erase the stigma of the defeat that they experienced at the hands of Nazi Germany. Moreover, de Gaulle evidently believed that an "internationally powerful and assertive France" was essential for Western Europe to free itself from the paralyzing effects of the bipolar system. Yet, de Gaulle's position that "France had a special right and duty to play the role of a world power simply because it was France" had as much to do with French foreign policy during the Cold War period, as any other reason.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 3-6.

<sup>129</sup> Yost, "France," in Murray and Viotti, eds., *The Defense Policies of Nations: A Comparative Study*, 243.

<sup>130</sup> Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 15.



The unwavering desire to preserve independent decision-making served several purposes. First of all, independence was the means by which to achieve grandeur. France could not be tethered by the Atlantic Alliance and still seek its rightful position in the world. De Gaulle also believed that maintaining France's independence prevented a feeling of dependence, which has a degenerating effect on a nation. In de Gaulle's view, dependence makes a nation become "nothing more than a passive follower,...one step away from giving up its interests all together."<sup>131</sup> Furthermore, as Gordon has put it, independence to de Gaulle was:

...a way to make sure French interests would not be overlooked by bigger, stronger powers or even smaller ones that did not share France's goals. Because states had different interests, it could not be in the interest of France to sacrifice its ultimate freedom of decision to anyone. Alliances, such as NATO and the European Economic Community, were fine and even necessary, and de Gaulle certainly took advantage of both. But their purpose was to facilitate cooperation, not to replace it with hierarchy, hegemony, or subservience. Little could be gained, de Gaulle believed – but much could be lost – by letting others make one's decisions.<sup>132</sup>

Finally, de Gaulle insisted that defense was "the first duty of the state," and "no state could maintain authority in the eyes of its citizens if it was seen to rely on a foreign power for its very existence."<sup>133</sup> Even though it was likely that French soldiers would be called upon to fight alongside their allies in future wars, de Gaulle thought it essential that France have its own say in how it would fight.<sup>134</sup> Therefore, the General's goal of maintaining the French right of independent decision-making contributed to his

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 21

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>134</sup> Howard, "A Europe of the Three: The Historic Context," 45.

withdrawal of France from further participation in NATO's integrated military command structure in 1966.<sup>135</sup> This is a decision that all French presidents after de Gaulle have maintained, upholding the tenet of avoiding participation in integrated military command structures, while still remaining in an alliance such as NATO.<sup>136</sup>

The Gaullist principle of aspiring to produce a majority of French weapons in France has also been an important method for the leaders in Paris to enhance their nation's grandeur and independence. As Professor David S. Yost has noted:

It is taken for granted in the nation's political and strategic culture that France will and must compete in all major dimensions of military-technological innovations, to the extent of its abilities. This helps to explain why France's defense posture in the 1970s and 1980s was frequently described as that of a 'mini-superpower.'<sup>137</sup>

In keeping with this principle of self-sufficiency, France produced the same variety and types of weapons systems as the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, only in lesser quantities. These included everything from tanks, artillery, jet aircraft and strategic bombers, to aircraft carriers, nuclear attack submarines, SSBNs, and land-based IRBMs. The most valuable means by which the French could claim their freedom from relying on NATO, and thereby preserve some level of independent decision-making in a European conflict, was clearly their nuclear weapons capability.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Yost, "France," in Murray and Viotti, eds., *The Defense Policies of Nations: A Comparative Study*, 237.

<sup>136</sup> Howard, "A Europe of the Three: The Historic Context," 45.

<sup>137</sup> Yost, "France," in Murray and Viotti, eds., *The Defense Policies of Nations: A Comparative Study*, 244.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 244-245.

The last principle attributed to de Gaulle, the aversion to a reliance on allies, is a little misleading, because ever since the time of Napoleon I the French have used bilateral and multilateral alliances to support their national defense and to secure their interests abroad. In fact, “France has not won a major war on its own since the Napoleonic period.”<sup>139</sup> Yet, almost immediately after de Gaulle established the Fifth Republic in 1958-1959, well before his official repudiation of the NATO command in 1966, he set France on a course to reduce its need to rely on allies. De Gaulle also made sure that the five tenets of France’s “strategic culture,” which he did not invent but stressed throughout his presidency, were followed in deed as well as in word.

The General’s first step toward upholding these five principles was to demand “equality with America and Britain as a leader of NATO.”<sup>140</sup> Then de Gaulle began to sever the ties that the leaders of the Fourth Republic had established with what he perceived to be an alliance command structure that was unreasonably dominated by the United States.<sup>141</sup> He withdrew French ships from NATO’s Mediterranean command in March 1959, “on the grounds that France might have military responsibilities or interests in Africa that other allied countries did not share.”<sup>142</sup> That same year, de Gaulle would not allow NATO to maintain stockpiles of nuclear weapons in France, causing the United States to also move the bombers that carried these weapons.<sup>143</sup> In 1961, de Gaulle

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 243.

<sup>140</sup> Young, *Cold War Europe 1945-89: A political History*, 91.

<sup>141</sup> Barzini, *The Europeans*, 148-149.

<sup>142</sup> Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 54.

<sup>143</sup> Keylor, *The Twentieth-Century World: An International History*, 332.

did not subordinate the French troops under NATO who were returning from the Algerian conflict that he helped end, but integrated them into a new First Corps, purely under national control.<sup>144</sup> He made the decisions in 1963 to produce tactical nuclear weapons independent from NATO and to withdraw French ships from NATO's Atlantic command.<sup>145</sup> These decisions were followed by French refusals to participate in forward defense exercises with NATO by the mid-1960s, and de Gaulle's final step to make France's "independent defense" the official doctrine of his country. Thus, it can be argued that the withdrawal of France from NATO's integrated military command structure was the result of de Gaulle following his own principles to a logical conclusion, as well as his negative reaction to the U.S. doctrine of "flexible response," and his own evolving ideas about how France's conventional forces were to be used in relation to its growing nuclear capabilities.<sup>146</sup>

It is also important to note that while de Gaulle was promoting political reconciliation with West Germany in the early 1960s, in order to wean Bonn away from the American-controlled alliance "as the first step toward the formation of a truly independent West European security system," he was actively sabotaging progress

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<sup>144</sup> Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 54.

<sup>145</sup> Keylor, *The Twentieth-Century World: An International History*, 332.

<sup>146</sup> Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 54-56. In the late 1950s, United States officials began to doubt the credibility of their strategy of "massive nuclear retaliation" as a reaction to even a conventional Soviet attack in Europe. Thus, the Americans developed the new doctrine of "flexible response," which was meant "to raise the strategic nuclear threshold by giving U.S. commanders a graduated array of means with which to respond to an attack." To support this new doctrine, U.S. officials called for the build up of more conventional forces in Europe. "French military doctrine was moving in exactly the opposite direction," putting less emphasis on conventional forces and more on nuclear deterrence.

toward European unity in other ways.<sup>147</sup> The main examples of his preventing Western European multilateral integration included de Gaulle's repeated vetoes of Britain's entry into the Common Market, as well as his obstruction against the entry of Spain and Portugal.<sup>148</sup>

By the end of 1968, severe economic problems within France and the harsh blow of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia caused de Gaulle to soften some of his hard line policies on French military independence, and even to reconcile some of his differences with NATO. The most significant change was a shift away from the doctrine of "pure deterrence," and a recognition that French conventional forces had to be something more than a tripwire for provoking French strategic nuclear attacks against the USSR. Yet, when de Gaulle resigned from the French presidency in April 1969, "his grand design of a sovereign, self-confident, and respected France, which had always taken priority over the pros and cons of specific policies, was well on its way to realization."<sup>149</sup>

De Gaulle's successor was his former prime minister, the Gaullist candidate Georges Pompidou. Thus, not surprisingly, there were no great revisions in French defense policy from June 1969 until Pompidou's death in April 1974: "no reintegration

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<sup>147</sup> Keylor, *The Twentieth-Century World: An International History*, 331. "Adenauer's flirtation with de Gaulle's projected Paris-Bonn axis seems to have stemmed from his fears that the Kennedy administration's flexible response doctrine and its insufficiently belligerent posture during the Berlin crisis of 1961-62 heralded a weakening of America's resolve to defend West Germany's security and political interests in Central Europe."

<sup>148</sup> Barzini, *The Europeans*, 148.

<sup>149</sup> Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 68.

with NATO and no compromise of the independent nuclear force.”<sup>150</sup> There were attempts to clarify the move away from the “all-or-nothing deterrence” doctrine toward the evolving plan to use France’s conventional forces to “test the intentions of an adversary” before resorting to nuclear attacks. Nevertheless, the dilemmas associated with an independent French defense posture that was also meant to meet the requirements of a unified Western European defense remained unresolved.<sup>151</sup> Pompidou was better disposed toward West European integration in other ways, however, and “finally approved Great Britain’s entry into the Common Market and helped launch a plan for European economic and monetary union.”<sup>152</sup>

By 1976, the Gaullist, Socialist, and Communist leaders in France were all accusing President Valéry Giscard d’Estaing of plotting France’s return to the integrated military command structure of NATO, and undermining de Gaulle’s defense and security principles in other ways through his endorsement of French participation in the forward battle (*bataille de l’avant*) of an East-West conflict in Central Europe. However, these were unwarranted accusations against the third president of the Fifth Republic. Neither Giscard d’Estaing nor his armed forces chief of staff, General Guy Méry, who published an article that supported the president’s views, advocated a departure from Gaullist military doctrine. Giscard’s comments about “Europe being a single strategic zone,” and the “need for French forces to be organized so as to be able to give battle,” echoed the

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>151</sup> Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe’s Strategic Choices, 1955-1995*, 107-109.

<sup>152</sup> Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 69.

observations in the 1972 White Book on Defense that described Gaullist doctrine.<sup>153</sup>

General Méry made it clear that the possibility of French participation in the forward battle merely referred to “the existing role of the French First Army as NATO’s counterattack reserve, and in no way advocated that French forces take up a position on NATO’s front lines.”<sup>154</sup>

Giscard d’Estaing’s and General Méry’s efforts to increase defense spending on conventional arms relative to nuclear forces were based more on the need to limit the growing gap between French and German conventional capabilities than on any attempt to bring France back into harmony with NATO strategy. Thus, the French president’s increased attention to his country’s conventional forces was based on “the entirely Gaullist motive of assuring France the full panoply of military assets necessary for an independent foreign policy.”<sup>155</sup> Nevertheless, continued criticism at home about reintegration into NATO and compromising French independence caused Giscard d’Estaing’s government “to return to ambiguous formulas about optional participation in the ‘forward battle’ in Germany and stressed the national sanctuarization function of France’s nuclear forces.”<sup>156</sup> Giscard d’Estaing’s views about his country’s Gaullist national outlook in relation to NATO are best expressed by a statement he made in 1980:

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<sup>153</sup> Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe’s Strategic Choices, 1955-1995*, 124-126.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 127.

<sup>156</sup> Yost, “Franco-German Defense Cooperation,” in Szabo, ed., *The Bundeswehr and Western Security*, 221.

There is no contradiction between belonging to an alliance and pursuing an independent policy. ...If France were to align itself with some other country's policy, its policy would be simple, but it would cease to exist. Seen from the outside, France would become the province of a superpower [that is, the United States]. This is not what our history teaches us [to accept], nor is it what our people want.<sup>157</sup>

Despite the facts that Mitterrand was the first Socialist chief of state of the Fifth Republic and that he had been General de Gaulle's most severe critic for decades, by 1981 Mitterrand was implementing a security policy that was firmly based on de Gaulle's principles. The transformation of the Socialist Party (PS) in the second half of the 1970s toward an acceptance of the Gaullist model resulted from both the need to bring the PS in line with public opinion on French defense doctrine, and as a reaction to increased Soviet militancy in Europe and around the world. Mitterrand's main challenge was to find a way to reconcile the Gaullist principles with a greater need for France to contribute more to a stronger European defense.<sup>158</sup>

Throughout Mitterrand's two presidencies, in a manner befitting de Gaulle, he made it clear that he alone was responsible for French foreign and defense policy, especially when it came to nuclear deterrence, an attitude which he often voiced publicly:

It is I who determine France's foreign policy, not my ministers. ...It is not conceivable that a policy could be put into action without my agreement, or more precisely, without my impetus.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Giscard d'Estaing quoted in Yost, "France," in Murray and Viotti, eds., *The Defense Policies of Nations: A Comparative Study*, 243.

<sup>158</sup> Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 106-112.

<sup>159</sup> President Mitterrand quoted in Yost, "France," in Murray and Viotti, eds., *The Defense Policies of Nations: A Comparative Study*, 255.



The responsibility of [nuclear] decision lies with the president of the Republic, and with the president alone.<sup>160</sup>

In the early 1980s, the main theme of Mitterrand's defense and security policy continued to be national independence, "in which independent nuclear weapons functioned as a source of both deterrence and national prestige, in which deterrence was based on concepts of 'proportionality' and 'uncertainty,' and in which NATO's doctrine of 'flexible response' was formally refused."<sup>161</sup> The Mitterrand government also continued to reject all of the following: "participation in NATO's integrated military commands; the deployment of foreign forces on French territory; automatic access of allied air forces to French airspace; the automatic engagement of French troops in case of conflict; and the occupation of a 'space' on the central front."<sup>162</sup>

Nevertheless, as early as 1982, Mitterrand began to adapt certain aspects of France's Gaullist doctrine toward a more conciliatory policy with the Atlantic Alliance and pursued of a better relationship with the FRG. The first important advance with the FRG was "the Kohl-Mitterrand decision of 22 October 1982 to implement the defense clauses of the Elysée Treaty," and to create a Franco-German Commission on Security and Defense with the aim "to build a greater degree of mutual confidence and consensus regarding security matters."<sup>163</sup> The second crucial step announced at the end of 1982 was

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<sup>160</sup> President Mitterrand quoted in Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 113.

<sup>161</sup> Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 118.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>163</sup> Yost, "Franco-German Defense Cooperation," in Szabo, ed., *The Bundeswehr and Western Security*, 221-222.

the reorganizing of the French army to play a greater role in the defense of Western Europe. The most important aspect of this reorganization effort was the creation of the Rapid Action Force, the *Force d'Action Rapide* (FAR), which could intervene far forward in West Germany.<sup>164</sup> By 1983, the French were also participating in maneuvers with the Bundeswehr to show their willingness to take part in forward defense if necessary.<sup>165</sup>

In the early to mid-1980s, Mitterrand also made it clear that "the Atlantic Alliance was now to be considered, with the nuclear force, one of the 'two pillars of security' for France," both due to his misgivings about the increasing Soviet threat to Western Europe and his determination to encourage the West Germans not to court neutralism as a response to the buildup of Soviet power.<sup>166</sup> This new perspective led to more cooperation with the United States and the FRG concerning the possible use of nuclear weapons in the European theatre. In an unprecedented declaration on 28 February 1986, Mitterrand declared "himself disposed to consult the Chancellor of the FRG on the possible employment of prestrategic [tactical nuclear] French weapons on German territory," and indicated that he had "decided, with the Chancellor of the FRG, to equip himself with technical means for immediate and reliable consultation in times of crisis."<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe's Strategic Choices*, 141-147.

<sup>165</sup> Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 116.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, 121-122.

<sup>167</sup> Yost, "Franco-German Defense Cooperation," in Szabo, ed., *The Bundeswehr and Western Security*, 223.

Despite Mitterrand's belief that France had to reinforce NATO against the Soviet threat, and the fact that he had no illusions that an independent Western European defense identity could be a substitute for the Atlantic Alliance of the 1980s, he also accepted and voiced the Gaullist view that "it would be just as dangerous for Europe to abandon itself to the protection of a country outside of our own continent."<sup>168</sup> Thus, from the beginning of his first presidency, Mitterrand tended to focus most on improving the Franco-German relationship over other portions of his country's increased solidarity with NATO. The reorganization of French conventional forces was clearly meant to encourage German support for the French perspectives on European defense and security, as much as to help the U.S.-dominated Alliance. Both the implementation of the Elysée Treaty in 1982 and the resurrection of the Western European Union (WEU) in 1984 were Paris-Bonn initiatives.<sup>169</sup>

With the beginning of the "cohabitation" period of French government in 1986 coinciding with the changing conditions in the East-West confrontation affecting European security, many West European governments were anxious about French stability. They worried that a lack of consensus between the Socialist president and the Gaullist prime minister would prevent France from coping with a growing requirement to do more for the defense of Western Europe "as the American protectorate eroded."<sup>170</sup> Yet, contrary to these fears, during the two years of cohabitation the French leaders

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<sup>168</sup> Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 124.

<sup>169</sup> Howorth, "France," in Howorth and Menon, eds., *The European Union and National Defense Policy*, 24-25.

<sup>170</sup> Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 144.

supported each other's efforts to bolster their country's military role in Europe:

Between 1986 and 1988, Mitterrand and Chirac both sought to augment the French commitment to German security, to maintain France's nuclear priority, and to improve the French relationship with NATO. Both supported the new military program law, the continued implementation of the defense clauses of the 1963 Elysée treaty, and the development of a joint military brigade with the Germans. When Chirac took the initiative to relaunch the Western European Union in 1987 and to sponsor a 'European security charter,' Mitterrand backed him, and when Mitterrand approved French military maneuvers deep inside the Federal Republic, Chirac gladly signed on. Both leaders celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Elysée treaty in January 1988, both supported the creation of a Franco-German Council for Security and Defense, and both broke with precedent to attend the March 1988 NATO summit.<sup>171</sup>

Nevertheless, there was a key difference between the security strategy of the French Right and Left during the cohabitation period. While Chirac and the Right became more inclined to favor an Atlanticist strategy of flexible response, Mitterrand and the Left reaffirmed the Gaullist principle of pure nuclear deterrence. The Prime Minister suggested that France's military response to an attack on the FRG would involve a versatile and graduated "range of means," to include the use of French tactical nuclear weapons. The president favored the concept of nonwar, "the idea that the *raison d'être* of French nuclear weapons was to avoid war rather than win it."<sup>172</sup> Ultimately, it was the French people who decided which strategy would take precedence, by re-electing Mitterrand as president with a clear majority (54 per cent) over Chirac in May 1988. Once again, the French had chosen to support the policies of pure deterrence, independence, Franco-German cooperation, and détente with the Soviet Union, which

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., 155-156.

de Gaulle had favored in the 1960s.<sup>173</sup>

In 1989, the astonishing collapse of the Eastern bloc, the opening of the Berlin Wall, and the implications of German reunification caused the greatest difficulties for French defense policy since the start of the Fifth Republic.<sup>174</sup> In the course of the year, “developing a military strategy to ensure national interests without conflicting with European ones; paying the increasing costs of maintaining nuclear, conventional, and global military roles; and finding an accepted balance between defense and disarmament” became the key issues that threatened the Gaullist model.<sup>175</sup> Moreover, these were long term problems that the French government was trying to resolve throughout the 1990s, and continues to face today.

### **C. THE END OF THE COLD WAR TO THE PRESENT, 1989-2000**

From the end of the Cold War to the present, French officials have deviated from the Gaullist principles, making significant progress toward European unification and the development of a European Security and Defense Identity. There are two key reasons for this change in course. First, one of the lessons learned from leaving the integrated military structure of NATO in 1966 was the realization that France had lost more influence in Europe by going its own way than it might have had if it had continued to participate in this command arrangement.<sup>176</sup> Thus, in order to maximize their influence

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<sup>173</sup> Young, *Cold War Europe 1945-89: A political history*, 101.

<sup>174</sup> Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe's Strategic Choices, 1955-1995*, 213-215.

<sup>175</sup> Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, 158.

<sup>176</sup> Howorth, “France,” in Howorth and Menon, eds., *The European Union and National Defense Policy*, 34-35.

over the post-Cold War environment in Europe, French leaders have increased their country's involvement in the transatlantic Alliance, and they have become some of the most active officials in the region promoting the EU and ESDI.<sup>177</sup> Second, France's leaders have concluded that the best way to limit the German "threat" to France's national security interests is to form a close bilateral partnership with the Germans and to support their full integration in a multilateral institution – the European Union.<sup>178</sup> However, as stated earlier, French leaders are still struggling with certain elements of France's political and strategic culture as they work toward improving their relationship with a new NATO, and advancing European integration and the construction of an ESDI.

From 1989 to 1993, the Socialists and Mitterrand refused to significantly modify France's relationship with NATO. As Philip H. Gordon has pointed out:

...it [France] resisted almost all of NATO's new initiatives, and it seemed to see NATO reform as designed to stifle the creation of a European security identity. By the end of 1992 France did agree to allow NATO to undertake some functional and geographical tasks (specifically, peacekeeping on behalf of the UN and CSCE), and certain French leaders such as Defense Minister Pierre Joxe began calling for France 'to participate more in the future than it has in the past in politico-military discussions.' But...instead of seeking to reintegrate with NATO and give the alliance a new role, Mitterrand reminded his allies that NATO was not a 'holy alliance,' and [Roland] Dumas repeatedly made clear that 'France's relations with NATO have not changed.'<sup>179</sup>

For the Socialist government, one of de Gaulle's objectives – asserting European interests vis-à-vis the United States and Russia – was still the main purpose of European

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<sup>177</sup> Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe's Strategic Choices, 1955-1995*, 217-219.

<sup>178</sup> Gordon, *France, Germany, and the Western Alliance*, 87-89.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, 84.

integration. "France's willingness to accept the higher degree of integration embodied in the Maastricht Treaty signified not the abandonment of national self-assertion but the progressive transference of French strategic ambitions from the national to the West European level."<sup>180</sup>

The center-right opposition, led by Jacques Chirac, argued that reintegration with the substantially reduced American forces in Europe would not be the same as when the United States had 325,000 soldiers on the continent. Other leaders from the center-right coalition of the Rally for the Republic (RPR) and Union for Democracy (UDF) also said that "the reasons that led France to take a singular position within NATO are no longer valid," and "that the time has come to get away from ambiguities and to be present where forces and missions are decided – NATO."<sup>181</sup> However, no opposition leaders called for the total reintegration of France into NATO, only into select bodies such as the Military Committee, boycotted by France since 1966. Chirac's objective was not so much to "enter NATO's existing military structure but rather to reform it radically in the direction of better political control of its activities, the trimming of its structures and the use of these structures by Europeans as such."<sup>182</sup>

Beginning with the cohabitation government led by Prime Minister Eduoard Balladur in March 1993, the center-right backed up some of their calls for greater

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<sup>180</sup> Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe's Strategic Choices, 1955-1995*, 237.

<sup>181</sup> Gordon, *France, Germany, and the Western Alliance*, 84.

<sup>182</sup> Parmentier, "Painstaking Adaptation to the New Europe: French and German Defense Policies in 1997," 30.

involvement in the Atlantic Alliance by taking full advantage of NATO command assets for France's peacekeeping missions in the Balkans, participating in NATO's enforcement of the no-fly zone over the former Yugoslavia, and by being the most vocal of the European nations in lobbying for more U.S. involvement in the former Yugoslavia. Additionally, the French returned to full participation in NATO's Military Committee, and not only agreed to take part in the new NATO forum on nuclear non-proliferation but to also co-chair it along with the Americans.<sup>183</sup>

Part of the reason that Balladur and later the conservative RPR-UDF government of President Jacques Chirac could be more pro-NATO and pro-EU than the Socialists is due to their Gaullist roots. Mitterrand and the Socialists always had to be on guard against "being accused of betraying de Gaulle's legacy."<sup>184</sup> Nevertheless, the Balladur government also began to have an identity crisis soon after coming to power, and the French seemed to be having second thoughts even about their commitments under the Maastricht Treaty. The French feared that "each step toward greater integration brought them closer to the point where fundamental aspects of national sovereignty would shift from the national to the European level," which "posed a challenge to many of the basic myths and symbols of French national identity."<sup>185</sup> The French also worried that deeper integration "might ultimately mean the subordination of French sovereignty to a

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<sup>183</sup> Gordon, *France, Germany, and the Western Alliance*, 85.

<sup>184</sup> Yost, "France," in Murray and Viotti, eds., *The Defense Policies of Nations: A Comparative Study*, 252.

<sup>185</sup> Kosk, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe's Strategic Choices, 1955-1995*, 238.



dominant Germany,” with a strategic perspective that downgraded European security independence in favor of United States strategic interests.<sup>186</sup>

Despite their numerous concerns, throughout the mid-1990s French leaders continued on a path of carrying forward European integration and increased cooperation with NATO. In June 1996, the French had an important chance to demonstrate their solidarity with the Germans at the NATO Defense Ministers meeting in Berlin, with a view toward furthering the establishment of a European Security and Defense Identity within NATO. This had begun with the SACEUR agreement in January 1993 that clarified the command relationship of the Eurocorps under the WEU “separable but not separate from” NATO. Contrary to German motives, once again the French clearly wanted to use a European identity within the Alliance to give the Europeans greater influence over the decision making and control of NATO.<sup>187</sup> As Professor Guillaume Parmentier from the University of Paris has described the situation:

Admittedly, Germany felt that the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) would provide, if properly used by the Europeans, sufficient opportunity for the expression of European identity on the military level, whereas the French, like the British, wished to flank the SACEUR with a European deputy who would not only replace the SACEUR during his absence but would also head any military operations in which the Americans had decided not to participate.<sup>188</sup>

Despite their differing motives, the similarity in the French and German positions in 1996, as in the early 1990s, pushed ESDI farther along and “the ‘Berlin Signal’ well

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid., 238-239.

<sup>187</sup> Parmentier, “Painstaking Adaptation to the New Europe: French and German Defense Policies in 1997,” 32.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 32.

and truly represented the founding act of a European identity within NATO.”<sup>189</sup> It is also important to note that the acceptance of the WEU’s relationship to NATO, and allowing it recourse to Alliance resources, gave the WEU more credibility “to fulfil its role as the armed force of the European Union.”<sup>190</sup>

After the NATO Berlin meeting in June 1996, the French became more vigorous in pushing their diplomatic initiatives within the EU. As Jolyon Howorth has stated:

Partly in collaboration with Germany, France took the lead in pressing for: the inclusion of Petersberg tasks in the remit of the Maastricht Treaty; the reinforcement of the role and competence of the Council of Ministers in all defense matters; the empowerment of the Council to define the aims and objectives of the European Union in the defense and security field; the reinforcement of WEU’s operational powers; and the eventual merger of WEU and the EU.<sup>191</sup>

By the mid-1990s, the country that had long rejected integrated command structures as a point of principle was deeply involved in developing a Common Foreign and Security Policy and a security and defense identity for Europe within the Atlantic Alliance. Additionally, France was reorganizing its military forces in order to intervene more widely in Europe, while also establishing land, sea, and air integrated force structures, such as the Eurocorps, EUROFOR, EUROMARFOR, and a Franco-British Euro Air Group.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>190</sup> Howorth, “France,” in Howorth and Menon, eds., *The European Union and National Defense Policy*, 35.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 35-36.

<sup>192</sup> Ronald Tiersky, “French Military Reforms and Strategy,” *National Defense University Strategic Forum* 94, November 1996, Available [Online]: [<http://www.ndu.edu/inss/strforum/forum94.html>], February 1999.

Another radical departure from France's Gaullist past was the shift away from an emphasis on nuclear weapons toward conventional weapons for power projection.<sup>193</sup> Moreover, for economic reasons, President Chirac continued a trend started by Mitterrand to abandon the longstanding Gaullist goal of self-sufficiency in all weapon types, "especially in cases where French manufacture has been particularly weak or nonexistent: satellite intelligence; command, control and communication equipment; and strategic lift."<sup>194</sup> Instead, the French turned to their European partners to share the costs of developing new armaments independent of the United States.<sup>195</sup>

In the last half of the 1990s, European integration began to pick up a seemingly irreversible momentum from the plan to establish a single European currency, and France even appeared to be moving toward full reintegration in NATO. Nevertheless, the controversy over the command of NATO's southern region (AFSOUTH) led to France's June 1997 decision to remain outside the Atlantic Alliance's integrated command structure. This is a decision that the cohabitation government of President Chirac and Prime Minister Lionel Jospin has still not reversed, complicating the development of an ESDI within NATO.<sup>196</sup>

The French have also had problems agreeing with the Germany, Britain, and smaller European countries about the concepts needed to form a Common Foreign and

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<sup>193</sup> Howorth, "France," in Howorth and Menon, eds., *The European Union and National Defense Policy*, 40.

<sup>194</sup> Tiersky, "French Military Reforms and Strategy," 5.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>196</sup> Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security*, 215-216.

Security Policy that will serve to guide the security institutions of the European Union. Some of the past conceptual differences that had to be worked out between the French and the Germans involved: France's strong support for appointing a "lead-nation" at the start of any WEU-led operation, which was opposed by the Germans until May 1997; French desires for the European Council and the EU Secretary General to implement joint foreign and security policy conflicted with German support for the European Commission, Parliament and Court of Justice to oversee the implementation of a CFSP; and French efforts to reduce the North Atlantic Council's role in managing NATO assets made available for WEU-led operations through the CJTF concept also contrasted with German support for NATO controls over the Alliance's own assets.<sup>197</sup> The reason French and German leaders have been able to compromise on such hard issues is their shared dedication to the goal of establishing a CFSP and defense and security identity for Europe, regardless of their differing and perhaps contradictory motives for pursuing this goal.

Two of France's most important contributions to advancing a European Security and Defense Identity at the beginning of the twenty-first century involve its increasing military cooperation with the other European countries and the United States, and the growing capabilities of the Eurocorps. The military leaders of France have been recommending greater integration of their forces within NATO since the early 1990s, after the Gulf War and the early days of the Bosnia conflict showed how much technology and training the French forces had missed by remaining outside the integrated

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<sup>197</sup> Parmentier, "Painstaking Adaptation to the New Europe: French and German Defense Policies in 1997," 33-34.

command structure of the Atlantic Alliance.<sup>198</sup> Therefore, the French armed forces have become more interested in improving their interoperability with NATO by adapting French doctrine and command and control capabilities to Alliance standards.<sup>199</sup> Eurocorps successes have included: the full integration of a multinational staff at the corps headquarters level and within the French-German Brigade headquarters; two rotations of elements from the French-German Brigade in Bosnia-Herzegovina and once in Macedonia; and also the rotation of Eurocorps staff elements through the SFOR mission in Bosnia.<sup>200</sup> However, the achievement that has brought France closest to realizing its goal for forming the Eurocorps as a European entity which includes forces from Germany, Belgium, Spain, and Luxembourg was the decision by NATO to have the Eurocorps headquarters take command of a KFOR rotation on 18 April 2000.<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Tiersky, "French Military Reforms and Strategy," 5.

<sup>199</sup> John Vinocur, "A Push to Redefine Eurocorps Role," *International Herald Tribune*, 31 May 1999, p. 4.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>201</sup> Kristian Kahrs, "Eurocorps Assumes Command of KFOR," *KFOR Online*, 19 April 2000, Available [Online]: [[http://kforonline.com/news/report/nr\\_19apr00.htm](http://kforonline.com/news/report/nr_19apr00.htm)], April 2000.

## V. CONCLUSION

The differences between the French and German strategic cultures have been the cause for two key dilemmas hindering the Franco-German efforts to establish a viable European Security and Defense Identity. The first dilemma stems from a long-standing belief by German officials that one of the best ways to guarantee European stability is to support both the engagement and leadership role of the United States in the region, which they have not been willing to undermine by developing institutions that might threaten the American commitment to European security. Such a view has conflicted with the long-standing goal of French leaders to develop a more independent Europe in which France would have a prominent leadership role and in which U.S. influence would be greatly diminished. The second dilemma involves French efforts to reconcile the Gaullist principle of preserving national autonomy with an ever-increasing commitment to European integration and France's growing role in the integrated defense and security architecture of Europe.

Despite Germany's increased freedom of action as a completely sovereign and united state following the end of the Cold War, its leaders have continued to devise and execute German defense and security policy almost entirely in cooperation with others and within the context of international institutions. John S. Duffield and Johannes Bohnen reached similar conclusions about Germany in the 1990s:

Indeed, Germany, more than most other European countries, has vigorously sought to maintain, strengthen, and adapt wherever possible the regional security institutions that arose during the Cold War – and in some

cases to develop new ones. Above all, Germany's commitment to NATO, which many doubted at the time of unification, has not wavered.<sup>202</sup>

With the disappearance of an overriding threat and US encouragement to further integrate in defence matters, Bonn is more willing than ever to promote a distinct European security and defence identity. Germany did not become less Atlanticist but, compared to the days of the Cold War, the government developed a new determination to work towards a genuine European security and defence capability within the framework of NATO.<sup>203</sup>

German rejection of unilateralism for a strong embrace of multilateralism as the only appropriate mode of conducting security affairs is the prominent feature of German strategic culture that developed in the post-World War II/Cold War years. During this same period, the belief in the importance of U.S. engagement as being essential to European stability matured from a similar view held by many Germans as far back as during the early 1920s.<sup>204</sup> Therefore, it would be inaccurate to argue that German acceptance and support for the U.S. role in Europe through NATO is only the result of the American nuclear and conventional force guarantees during the Cold War. Today, at the start of a new century that appears less threatening to the Germans, they still believe that the Atlantic Alliance should remain Europe's primary defense and security organization.

From the 1960s when de Gaulle started France on a separate course outside the integrated command structure of the Atlantic Alliance until the collapse of the Berlin

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<sup>202</sup> Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, 225.

<sup>203</sup> Johannes Bohnen, "Germany," in Jolyon Howorth and Anand Menon, eds., *The European Union and National Defense Policy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 62.

<sup>204</sup> Nelson, *Victors Divided: America and the Allies in Germany, 1918-1923*, 170-173.

Wall in 1989, and even at the beginning of the 1990s, German officials had to maintain a balance between their country's relationships with NATO and France. This caused German officials to have to work separately with the French to strengthen their defense ties, especially during the intervals when U.S. support for European security appeared less reliable, but the overriding German commitment to the United States and NATO always limited Franco-German defense integration and prevented the establishment of a separate European defense and security identity.

Between the end of 1992 and the spring of 1996, the growing German acceptance of international obligations commensurate with the nation's power, particularly in European security, along with the growing desire of French leaders to regain a greater say in European defense and security policy even at the expense of maintaining their Gaullist tradition of independence, had successfully converged with American willingness to support the establishment of an ESDI within NATO. Since the June 1996 meeting of NATO Defense Ministers in Berlin, which clarified the basic principles for the European pillar of the Alliance, there has been important progress in all areas of Europe's defense and security architecture. The crucial advances have included: a clearer articulation of a Common Foreign and Security Policy for the EU, with an appointed high representative, Javier Solana, to oversee further developments of a CFSP; the acceptance and implementation of the CJTF concept as the means by which NATO assets can be used to support an EU-led operation; and the actual implementation of greater European control over operations in the Balkans using NATO assets, such as placing the Kosovo mission



under the command of a German general, Dr. Klaus Reinhardt, and, as of 18 April 2000, under the leadership of the Eurocorps and its commanding general, Juan Ortuno of Spain.

Despite these encouraging advances toward a more viable European Security and Defense Identity at the start of the twenty-first century, it is of critical importance to remember that France and Germany still have distinct strategic cultures. While the leaders of both these countries share the same goals, such as developing a stronger and more stable Europe, their motives are not identical. The Germans have a well-established belief that the best way to advance their national interests, address their security concerns, and prevent a return to destructive nationalistic policies is to firmly ground their country in international institutions. Thus, they have supported developing an ESDI within NATO, and advancing other institutions to promote European peace and stability. On the other hand, France's success at adapting its strategic culture in order to participate in multiple integrated command structures is relatively new in comparison to the FRG. Only the center-right Gaullists themselves, who have been a part of or have led the French government since 1993, have been able to successfully deviate from the strategic norms established by General de Gaulle. Furthermore, the desires of the French to promote their national agenda by maximizing their influence over Europe through greater involvement in NATO and by developing the EU and ESDI can be interpreted as Gaullist aspirations. Additionally, France's realist concern about Germany dominating Europe, which is based on a historical mistrust of German power, is another key motive for French participation in supporting the FRG's full integration in Europe's multilateral institutions.

While it is possible to say with some confidence that the Germans will continue on a resolute path toward advancing European economic and political integration, actively pursuing ways to improve the capabilities of an ESDI within NATO, it is not so clear that France will remain dedicated to each of these goals. As long as French leaders continue to be influenced by the distinctive approach to foreign and national security policy established by Charles de Gaulle, many obstacles to Franco-German cooperation in furthering the development and strengthening the capabilities of a European Security and Defense Identity will persist in making this a slow process. It is also unclear whether past French resistance to the U.S. leadership role in Europe on security affairs will resurface and damage the framework of an ESDI serving as the European pillar of NATO.

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